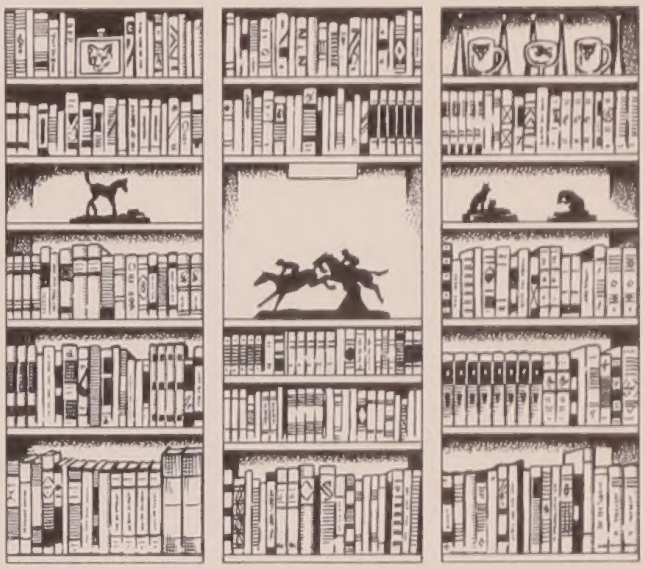

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Foxdale-LAN

June 14, 1937

To Blanche F. Hooker
from
Charles D. Lanier

WE GO FOXHUNTING ABROAD

We Go Foxhunting Abroad

A FIRST VENTURE WITH IRISH BANKS AND ENGLISH DOWNS

By

CHARLES D. LANIER

Privately printed for friends to whom hunting, hounds and horses are what they are to us

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CHARLES D. LANIER

TO

The girls we left behind us

Apology

THESE notes of a first adventure in Old World foxhunting were made for family reading.

Some friends who saw them in manuscript seemed to be entertained—doubtless by the freshness of the experiences to two would-be sporting characters—and the story is now put into printed form to present to those with whom we have charming and grateful associations in the matters of hunting and horses.

C. D. L.

December, 1924

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We Go Foxhunting Abroad

Outward Bound

WE sailed from New York on the *President Roosevelt* on January 19th, with more than two months before us to try the foxhunting of the Old Country.

The adventure had been talked of for two years, but not as a very real thing. I had not been away from work so long for thirty-nine years. There were a hundred reasons why the thing could not be done and only one why it should be done—that we wanted to go off and have a good time together. The final and deciding impulse came in B's retirement in favor of Sally from "showing" our hunters, in which she had been accumulating more or less notoriety since she was nine years old. We had had a lot of fun together in this, but with B seventeen years old and coming to be a young woman, it seemed better to close the chapter. She had stood the notoriety well, if I do say it as shouldn't, but it was only human if there was some undercurrent of sadness in leaving the thrills of competition, and a bit of justifiable

pensiveness in regarding the horses which she loved so in association with these contests.

To graduate the hunting expedition across the Atlantic from a dream into a real thing occurred to me as a solatium that fitted the occasion, with the added lure of making up, by reading together, while we were foxhunting among the scenes of the English classics, for some of the formal education B had missed because of frequent absences from school on hunting and various horse adventures.

We had never hunted on the other side; we were the greenest and most self-conscious of travellers; we knew no one in the hunting countries to be invaded; we took no horses nor even a saddle; a small bundle of letters of introduction, scarcely half a dozen of them to people having any active affiliations with horses and hounds, some addresses of English and Irish worthies reputed to have hunters for hire, and kits of hunting apparel of sorts,—formed our entire sporting capital.

It was really a very juvenile expedition, despite my years—very like two youngsters starting westward, on their own, to be cowboys and fight Indians. But it had the quality of its defects—the imagined things beyond the horizon, the tang of uncertainty, the sense of pal-

ship, the feeling that whatever came of it would be something new to our experience and the underlying faith in the Red Gods as deities sometimes kinder than other times but never without gifts that are good.

As nearly as we had a plan it was to go, after a day or two of shopping in London, to the South of Ireland to hunt there with one pack or another through February; then March in the South of England with the Cattistock, the Blackmore Vale and the Duke of Beaufort's, with a hasty pilgrimage to the Grand National on March 28th as a finale. A day or two with one or more of the "fashionable" hunts in the Midlands simply to give B the sensation of viewing one of these elaborate functions with four or five or six hundred riders in the field, was tentatively on the program, but most uncertain because of the cattle disease which was already, before we sailed, stopping the hounds throughout the English Midlands. Americans bent on English hunting are apt to make straight for Leicestershire, the center of the Midland "Shires," but we were quite aware that with such crowded fields two stray Yankee strangers would see little of hounds, or of the English countryside and country life, such as we hoped to view with the provincial hunts

where hounds might be just as capable and Masters and the smaller fields just as keen as any in the "Shires."

We waved our handkerchiefs to a row of tearful relatives of assorted ages, sizes and sexes, lined up on the Hoboken dock, the wailing clan being comforted, coached, convoyed and confectioned by Archer Brown (naturally).

The *Roosevelt* we had selected because of the encomiums of Mrs. Colby Chester, who had crossed on her earlier in the winter, and because of the very moderate rate at which we secured two splendid staterooms and a bathroom between, one room for B and the faithful Sara and one for me. A steady, orderly 7-day boat she proved to be, with a hospitable, cleancut American captain, a table loaded with food of great variety and good quality and personal service difficult to obtain on the "floating palaces" and "ocean greyhounds" proper. In consequence of a letter from Cliff Mallory to some one occupying a seat of the mighty, we found ourselves very much cared for in every way. We were seated at the Captain's table, along with Judge S. of Buffalo and his wife and mother and the Baroness Wrangel, wife of the General commanding the last White Russian Army, the one crowded off the tip of the

Crimea by the Bolshevik hordes on that last dramatic night of organized resistance to Lenine and Trotsky.

Judge and Mrs. S. were charming people, well-bred in the best sense, one of those childless couples who by their eager interest in life and young enthusiasm as middle-aged playmates seem to make up to themselves something of what has been denied them. They were not only delightful companions, almost as much interested as we were in the hazy horizons of our sporting tour, but were also a godsend to me in proving perfect chaperons for B at the ship dances, a position which seemed to give them genuine pleasure, leaving me free after a half hour's inspection of the varied types of contortionists of all nations on the dancing floor, to retire luxuriously to the roomy, comfortable stateroom, a pipe and Robert Louis Stevenson.

The Baroness was an alert, dark, little woman of thirty-eight, looking fifteen years older—a matter not to be wondered at when one heard the tragic story of her experiences in fighting and flying from Red armies. She told us the Wrangel army, though scattered throughout the Near East, was still organized on paper and that the Baron and his officers

in Servia were grimly waiting for the Day. She had been to America raising money for the ill and destitute soldiers of her husband's army and was on her way back to him after a stop-over to see her young children, at school in Brussels.

It seemed rather an anticlimax that such a romantic figure, fresh from indescribable perils, hairbreadth escapes and hardships of every sort, recited to us very convincingly, should succumb to seasickness among the first of all on board and be utterly miserable throughout the voyage. She assured us that the horrors of the Crimean campaign and embarking 130,000 soldiers in a single night, when the Wrangel army was pinched off the peninsula, were unconsidered trifles compared to the roll of the *Roosevelt.*

There was some excuse for her; after two days of moderate weather a howling nor'west hurricane overtook us and shrieked for three entire days, with squalls, every half hour or so, of blinding snow and sleet. The captain disappeared from the passengers' ken; portholes were screwed tight for the entire time and wardrobe trunks, cavorting about the staterooms, did all the dancing that was indulged in on board. It was a case of tying one's self

in one's bed. When the captain again became visible to the naked eye, he made us feel better by estimating the hurricane at 100 miles an hour, with "more in the squalls." He added that it was by far the hardest blow he had known in his twenty-five years of seafaring, and that he was frankly uncertain at times what to do in the matter of the ship's engine speed; trying first full speed and then losing his nerve and going to half, and vice versa.

The gale was astern, or, of course, we should have been forced to heave to and lose some days. All westbound traffic gave it up, poked its nose into the wind and was glad enough to be alive without making headway.

Quite the most dramatic sea sight of our lives came in the midst of it, when there was a report that we were passing another ship. The few who had ventured topside crowded to the deck windows, or to those that had not been smashed by the big combers.

For a few moments a blinding snow squall shut us off from everything but the crest and trough of one mighty sea; then, as quick as one can say it, the storm veil lifted for a moment, brilliant sunshine appeared on an utterly white waste of ocean heaved into waves a quarter mile from crest to crest; and as we rose on one

of these—there, with every detail distinct, pitched and wallowed a great Cunarder, engines scarcely keeping her into the wind, screws racing out of every wave, and seemingly close enough to throw a stone to her decks—though doubtless she was actually a mile away. It was one of those visions of an instant, of such superb beauty and dramatic value as to live with one forever.

I have the well-earned reputation of being the second worst sailor living. I had originally claimed to be the worst, on the plea that when in 1905 I boarded the *Blücher* at Hoboken, I became actively ill on my way to the stateroom while the ship was yet steadfastly secured to her dock. I was, however, ousted from this proud eminence by S. S. McClure, who proved that whenever he was about to cross the Atlantic, which he has accomplished about three times a year for the past twenty-five years, as soon as the diagrams of the vessel's accommodations would be brought to his office that he might select his stateroom, the mere sight of those nautical documents would invariably bring on an acute attack of *mal-de-mer*.

So much the more unnatural, then, was it that I did not have one squeamish moment

during our big storm nor at any time in our travels, not even in the notorious Dover-Ostend crossing, when we thrashed into the teeth of a northeaster, and only two passengers appeared for lunch. On the contrary, I ate three good meals a day on the *Roosevelt* (instead of one half of one, as at home), walked five or ten miles on deck in the afternoon, enjoyed every moment of the voyage, and none more than when, after dinner (preceded by a salt water plunge), I would light a pipe in my stateroom, cock up my legs to brace the trunk into reasonable equilibrium and listen to B read aloud "The Master of Ballantrae" or "David Balfour."

This state of rude health is not important or interesting enough to occupy so much attention in even so trivial and intimate a recital as this, except for the fact that it sounds the keynote of our entire adventure. We were in luck at every turn; things that had never been good before were good on this trek; things that had always seemed hopeless became enjoyable; things that were pronounced impossible came to pass, and tangles apparently inextricable straightened out as if magic were at work. Some miracle was pulled off. I think I can guess at the supernatural agency, but there are

limits to candor even among our crowd on the Club car.

In intervals of R. L. S., we read the galley proofs of Harry Worcester Smith's forthcoming book describing his sporting invasion of Westmeath, in Ireland, in 1912, when he took over his American hounds to hunt that country as Master—the only instance, I think, of the use of American hounds in the United Kingdom. He had thoughtfully sent us these advance proofs and they are worth mentioning because the very detailed and voluminous account of his Irish experiences form excellent instruction for any American foxhunter planning to hazard the Irish banks.

The volume is always keenly enthusiastic and full of details useful to a sportsman, with now and then a story carrying the true Irish tang. As for instance: a gentleman was in a hot "burst," accompanied by a favorite groom on a young horse. The groom went down over an atrocious bank in a very bad-looking spill, indeed, and lay still as death while his horse got up and galloped away. The gentleman rode back and called out, "Eamonn, are you hurt bad?" "Yes, Sor," yells back Eamonn, "I'm unconscious."

When we were not reading together, B was

all over the ship and everywhere but where I could find her, playing the ship games, hobnobbing with Captain Fried on the bridge, or the wireless operator or purser or engineer. In fact, the *Roosevelt's* staff formally and officially adopted her, and when we boarded the same vessel again at Southampton nearly three months later and went to the identical staterooms we had coming eastward, it was the very next thing to arriving home, and we had a warm reception from everybody, from the skipper down to the boots. I dwell on B's freedom on board because it illustrates one of the advantages of a smaller vessel and of the fine discipline and watchful care (on this unit, at least) of the line flying the Stars and Stripes. An eighteen-year-old girl of the most unsuspecting and confiding nature would be just as safe from annoyance anywhere on the ship she wanted to go alone as she would be in her own home. A card sharper would not have lasted an hour under our Captain's quiet but keen scrutiny of things. It gave one a good, warm, patriotic feeling to find the atmosphere so wholesome and genial.

But this voyage of the *Roosevelt* is stringing out too long if we are to hope to carry anybody as far as the foxhunting. We reached Ply-

mouth harbor near midnight on Saturday; there was quite a wait while the tender took off 6,000 bags of mail; when we set foot on Albion, we found ourselves, at 1:30 Sunday morning, faced by the railroad strike, no sleeping car on the night train to London, and any subsequent movement of rolling stock highly uncertain. Judge S. and I opened negotiations for a motor car, with the thought of spending the rest of the night at Plymouth and motoring to London the next day. The price quoted for the trip brought assurances from us that we only wanted to go to London—not to buy the car; but the strike had put all miscellaneous transportation devices at staggering premiums and finally we secured two coach compartments on the train and proceeded to make ourselves as comfortable as possible for the night trip, with the effective aid of the tall, willowy chief "guard" adorned with an admirably flowing, long uniform coat and truly Chesterfieldian manners. B, swathed in her new coonskin coat, rolled over on a seat and was asleep before she finished rolling. I bundled up my feet and legs in the rugs that Lord Chesterfield had furnished, Sara shrank in a corner away from the cold and thus we spent our first night in the United Kingdom.

London and Hunting Kits

GEORGE DAVISON had described the Berkeley Hotel, Piccadilly, in such terms that we selected it for our four brief stop-overs in London, and it turned out a most happy choice. Arriving there very much dishevelled on this Sunday morning, we were received by the staff with a warmth and cordiality which somewhat overcame me; the secret did not come out until our second stay, a month later. Then, when we were dining downstairs instead of in our rooms, the headwaiter, whose attentiveness had been entirely abnormal, came to us at an appropriate stage of the meal and begged us to remember him to our cousin, Charles Lanier, of New York and Lenox, explaining that Mr. Lanier had patronized the Berkeley for a generation or two. We found ourselves automatically and very thoroughly introduced and endorsed through this same channel to nearly all the tradesmen we patronized.

With a deference due to royalty, not at all in accord with our positions of utter strangers

or with our shabby condition after the night spent in the clothes we wore, which were much tousled from assuming one writhing posture after another in attempts to keep warm and to dispel cramps,—we were ushered into two charming rooms on the third floor, one single for me and a double for B and Sara, with a bathroom suggesting the luxury of decadent Rome. (Subsequent business transactions showed that these quarters set us back rather less, per day, than a single little room at a prominent hotel in New York City.) The service at this hostelry was the best I have ever seen anywhere. There was nothing that could be asked for that was not furnished quickly, quietly and adequately, without too much servility and with no atmosphere of expected baksheesh. At a word, my trunk top was mended; a new stick replaced the broken one in my umbrella; when I felt somewhat languid about packing, a quiet valet without airs and graces performed prodigies in making two articles occupy the same space at the same time; there were no peacock alleys or other vast spaces of vulgarity—merely a snug, homelike entrance and reception room with few guests or servants ever in evidence until you wanted the latter; one had the choice of enjoying

French cooking at its best or simply grilled and roasted things done just right; finally there was the hall porter, John Hostettler, omniscient, omnipotent and withal as friendly and twinkling of eye as he was magnificent in person.

If anything need be added to complete the charms of the Berkeley for free-born, upstanding, democratic American citizens, let it be said that it is the one London hotel at which the Prince of Wales lunches, and if John Hostettler's manners were not too good he would point out to a visitor, at lunch time, an imposing and varied collection of British titles in the main dining room—assembled there, no doubt, in hopes that this might be one of the Prince's peckish days.

Three days were largely spent in introducing B to some of the famous institutions of London; in several visits, particularly, to the National Gallery, which is an especial delight to a highly imperfect connoisseur accompanied by the young because of the careful classification of masterpieces and the clear, adequate titles with each painting. My own method of avoiding the confusion and nerve-drain of viewing, in a few hours, a profusion of works of art that would furnish months of careful study, is to obey some impulse toward a particular artist

or canvas, and brush most lightly over all others. At the National, Whistler's two canvases, "A Symphony in White" and "A Nocturne in Blue," commanded the idolatry human limitations could not spread over thousands of gods and demi-gods.

We got in touch with Mr. and Mrs. Adrian Corbett, so pleasantly remembered in Greenwich and they lunched with us, piloted us through the Tower of London and, another day, took us to Dr. Johnson's home and to lunch at the "Cheshire Cheese," the latter a rather palpable and theatrical fake, with the only uninteresting food we found anywhere in England or Ireland.

Corbett was back in London from his business stay in America, working with Deterding in the gigantic and worldwide affairs of the Royal Dutch-Shell combination. A fine type, Corbett, and his wife charming; he is clean as a hound's tooth, physically, mentally and morally, and very human in spite of his total lack of amiable vices.

We evaded their hospitable invitations to their home on the score of our hurried and full engagements, but did get to dine with Sydney Brooks and his family, consisting of his invalid American wife and twenty-two-year-old daugh-

ter, Barbara. Brooks I had seen but once, since, as a bachelor, he used to spend week-ends with us at Greenwich, more than a quarter century ago, but he had not changed discernibly in physical appearance or otherwise; his propensity to see everything in a humorous light and hit it off with witty but amiable satire made him the best of company when we had a chance to do theatres and such with him.

We presented a few of our letters of introduction, chiefly to the end of getting authentic tips as to the best breeches, hat and hunting coat artists, and as to "hiring people," who would furnish horses. I called on Sir Henry Lunn and found him preparing to start, that afternoon, to Switzerland, with the Lord Saye and Sele and the latter's wife and daughter as companions, to indulge in Alpine winter sports. Sir Henry was friendliness and hospitality personified. He pressed us to come as his guests on this two weeks' trip to the Alps, made plans to have us at his home at Hastings when we should return from Ireland; immediately got me in touch with the Lord Saye and Sele to arrange for our projected day or two of hunting, a month hence, in the Midlands and from that time on never lost track of us wherever we were in England or Ireland, or relaxed his

efforts to give us a good time. He seemed to think that I had done something for him in America, twenty odd years ago, when he was not "Sir" Henry and not in his present opulence. I couldn't for the life of me remember what it was for which he considered himself indebted, but realizing that he held Dr. Shaw in great esteem and that he was taking genuine pleasure in being hospitable, let it go at that. I successfully evaded his project to give us a dinner to be attended by notabilities he thought we ought to meet and, for the time, his insistence that we should lunch or dine at the home of the Asquiths, with whom he was very intimate; but he couldn't get it out of his head that B and I should talk over horses and hunting with Margot and finally, two months later, corralled us for what proved to be an interesting lunch at the home of the Liberal leader.

Archer Brown's letter of introduction to Seton Beresford, mailed by us to the latter's London address, reached him just as he was starting for Paris, where his brother had died a few hours before, the news having escaped me in reading the morning paper. A third brother, Lord Decies, immediately called on us at the Berkeley, arriving just as we came in from shopping and under circumstances which

prevented my knowing until after he had left that we were entertaining a real live lord in the ruddy-faced, thickset, simply dressed Irish country gentleman who chatted with us below for a while and then came up to my room for a pipe and whisky and soda. I mention this particularly because the cordiality and thoughtfulness he showed in coming at once to call on us, in spite of the family loss and of his brother Seton's full letter of explanation about his tragic call to the continent, was the first instance of a hundred of the ready Irish geniality and hospitality which, always so engaging, had peculiar charm for two outlanders half wondering at this stage whether they were not impertinent in coming three thousand miles without invitation to join in the home sport of people to whom they were utter strangers.

Lord Decies was, too, the first instance of an Irish type we found conspicuous (and never more so than by its absence) during the next month—the members of the nobility and other landed gentry, forced by the "troubles" to leave immediately and forever historic homes that, often, had been in their families for many hundreds of years. The Beresford home was in the County Kildare; a famous and ancient establishment, rich in associations and tradi-

tion as well as priceless family heirlooms. The "troubles" had driven from it overnight these fine, upstanding country gentlemen; when I asked Lord D. where his new home was he said simply, "We have none, now; we are looking around for a place to stay."

We could write a volume merely about our three short days in London—everything was new to B and nearly everything to me; everything engaged our attention; simply walking or taxicabbing along the thoroughfares, we needed several pairs of eyes to note all we wanted to note; every narrow rambling street turning off into mysterious windings invited us to explore, and when we did so and found a still narrower, quaint alley, our imaginations got busy as to where it went and what picturesque old buildings walled it in.

A rather careful survey of the list of hundreds of London tradesmen, eager to furnish hunting kits—breeches makers to the Empress of India, hat makers to the Nawab of Hyderabad, etc., brought us to E. Tautz & Son of Oxford Street, as on the whole the most satisfactory breeches maker; Johnson as the hatter and Peal as the boot and shoe maker, with Archer Brown's favorites, Scott, Adie & Co., superlative in sweaters, stockings, rough over-

coats and all articles of superfine woolen make. We indulged in a perfect orgy of breeches buying. The first orders filled by Tautz, in unbelievably short time, were so satisfactory in fit, material and prices that we kept ordering, wherever we were, by mail or in person. The cost was, I reckoned, slightly less than forty per cent. of the New York figure and the materials somewhat better, with a much greater choice; we exultantly figured that if we could only keep it up long enough and buy enough riding breeches, we should have our entire trip paid for with the difference between English and American prices and only bewailed our failure to bring with us the dimensions of Sally's nether limbs. B got a scrumptious outfit of leathers and cords. I got brown cords and white cords and a particularly admirable pair of heavy white mole, washable and of a consistency, weight and toughness that I had never seen before in white materials. The last cost £5-5 or about $22.50. The next task was to wear these articles enough to impress the United States Custom House officials; we found that the "heavy" sections of the County Cork and the Blackmore Vale greatly simplified this problem; for a time I would ask lady riders in the hunting field, whose acquaintance

we had made, if they would kindly let their horses slobber on our new breeches, explaining that every slobber was worth several shillings in duties.

But with all the fullness and interest of these three days, we were a bit restless in the thought that they came out of the middle of the hunting season, and it was with some relief that we boarded the train, on the morning of January 30th, for Ireland, by the Holyhead route. The program was to reach Dublin that evening, spend the night there and proceed to Cork the next morning.

This gave us our first opportunity, going across England from southeast to northwest, to view the countryside, if only from a car window and we were kept busy with Baedeker and the maps in Bailey's invaluable "Hunting Directory." With the two we could determine pretty accurately just what hunting countries we were passing through and a clear day gave us a fine opportunity to study the fields, the going and the fences of more than a dozen famous hunts, including the Bicester, the Warwickshire, the Atherstone and other of the Midlands establishments. An hour or two showed clearly how it was possible that in England and Wales alone there should be so

many as 168 "recognized" foxhunts, besides the scores of scratch packs, harriers, deer hounds and otter hounds. In American countrysides, even in the few hunting sections proper, really good hunting and riding conditions are exceptional; in this island of clean, green pasture fields, the unhuntable and unridable portions were the very rare exceptions and beautiful going the great rule. The fences of the Midlands were anything but awesome—hedges averaging, say, three feet, with a ditch invariably nestling close to each trim hedge. Now and then two ditches, one on each side of the hedge, suggested the need of a bit of extension in the leap, and still more so the water that appeared, in some sections, so much more frequently than in America. In ten or twelve years of hunting in America, in Virginia, Pennsylvania, New York and Connecticut, with a dozen different packs, I have never personally had to negotiate a water jump and while such undoubtedly exist, it is only as very rare exceptions that prove the rule.

Ireland —and Banks!

WE crossed St. George's Channel from Holyhead on the swift Irish Mail packet, thrashing slapdash through choppy seas at the rate of twenty-eight or thirty miles an hour, with showers of spray like machine gun volleys sweeping the windward deck and leaving a subdued and serious looking congregation of passengers clustered to leeward. After a night at the Shelbourne in Dublin, Sara parted company with us to visit her relatives in the North, while we headed southward on the Cork train.

After the long day of travel, including the tumultuous dash across the Channel, and the frigid bedroom at a strange hotel, I must have been slightly on edge while we were leaving Dublin early in the morning, for when a motor car, carefully ordered the night before, appeared to take us from hotel to railroad station with no facilities for trunks and no surplus of time to catch the early train to Cork (after depositing Sara at her separate depot) —I made a tidy little disturbance in the typical

American manner—the first and last time I gave way to temper in the Emerald Isle. The hall boy recommended a decrepit one-horse cab (or one-third horse cab would be nearer the truth) hovering in the offing, a turnout that looked as if the three of us might possibly wedge ourselves in, but with no visible means to carry even one of our five substantial pieces of hand baggage, not to speak of the three large steamer trunks. Faced with the horror of losing a day of hunting through lying over until the next train and having released from my system what rude opinions of the hotel management I could formulate in short order, I assented, though with complete skepticism, to the shabby cabman's offer of help. In a trice, by I know not what miracles of ropes and knots, our entire outfit was attached to the ancient vehicle; the scarecrow of a driver was perched high in the air on a pile of hand-luggage and the scrawny remnants of a cabhorse was trotting with forelegs and cantering with hindlegs over the rough cobbles, striding boldly out on his one sound leg and yielding rhythmically on the other three with the art perfected by decades of earnest effort to keep away from the larder of the Meath hounds.

We arrived at each of the two stations just in

time and I had had my lesson. There is no point whatever in losing one's temper in Ireland. No one is impressed by it except oneself, after the event, and very unfavorably; and things invariably come out all right, despite appearances, all logic, distances, watches and weather to the contrary notwithstanding. If you are late, the train is late too, or they stop it for you; if you arrive at the meet after the hounds have gone, in a country totally strange to you, there is always a knowledgeable person who has done the same thing to pilot you by a short cut to the field of riders waiting around the first covert; if your horses don't show up at the meet to which you have flivvered, Mr. So-and-so and his daughter have changed their mind about hunting and the sympathetic groom puts your party on their horses; if three hours of arduous casting for salmon, with great fish actually bumping your fly out of the way, show beyond any shadow of doubt that it is only bait they will take today, and your gillie has forgotten to bring any, immediately appears on the scene a poacher with a jar of admirable prawns which he is delighted to surrender to you for "one and ninepence."

So, curiously eyed by the station loiterers, chiefly very boyish young soldiers in the uni-

form of the Free State, who appeared at every railroad station and most other public institutions, we got into our firstclass compartment on the Cork train and eagerly dug out Bailey and his excellent hunting maps of Ireland, which showed in red the boundaries of each hunt, for our journey southward across the counties of Dublin, Kildare, Tipperary, Limerick and Cork was to take us through the heart of the best foxhunting in Ireland, with car-window views of the Meath, Scarteen, Tipperary, Duhallow and Limerick countries, not to mention others of lesser fame.

We were again blessed with a perfect day for observation, a sharp night frost disappearing under the sun in a cloudless sky, with as high visibility as one ever gets in this moist atmosphere.

We were scarcely out of the city of Dublin when our eyes beheld for the first time an Irish "bank," that institution which, during the coming month, was to bring to us so much of fear, hope, triumph and defeat.

There it was, guarded by a wicked looking ditch, and there was another at the other end of the field, with two atrocious ditches, one on either side, and there were banks as far as the eye could see and wherever the eye rested, big

broad topped ones and smaller narrow ones; banks with sides rising at a fairly obtuse and hopeful angle and banks sheer as a board fence; banks crumbling with rabbit burrows and banks walled up on each side—the "stone-faced" variety of horrific memory; banks with good take-offs and landings varied by boggy approaches or drops that one felt in the pit of one's stomach even from a firstclass compartment in a railroad train. Now and again, as if the depths of human despair had not already been sounded, would appear "boreens," narrow, deep lanes formed by two banks, often hirsute with prickly gorse, too close together to jump in and out and too far apart to "fly" the whole monstrosity, even if flying might not land one in an unforeseen ditch.

B, who is as undemonstrative as she is observant, shook her head with a thoughtful smile over the worst of these portents. There is no use at all in writing about hunting, shooting or fishing unless one at least *tries* to tell the truth; I confess that if the mid-fifties were not well beyond the period of increase of stature, I should have lost a year's growth between Dublin and Cork. It did not seem equinely possible that such obstacles could be negotiated in fast cross-country riding. But there is, in

hunting, this saving grace for the apprehensive temperament: you remember you have been frightened before and are still alive; and there comes a sort of exaltation of terror that instead of holding you back, drives you, unresisting, on. Doubtless a number of well-bred, highly organized horses go to formidable jumps in the same frame of mind; it accounts for most of the "rushers." It can't be pure terror, because you are happy as only the gods should be, with nerves and muscles and will coordinating as yours should not, normally; it can't be just happiness, because you don't expect to come out of it alive. Well, let us be thankful for it, and that its thrills last on into retrospect.

More reasonably and less mystically, you consider (and this is no doubt the sole subconscious mental process of foxhunters of B's more quiet and cool temperament)—that if other people's horses have done these things, yours can; that there must be something about it all, outside your experience, that qualifies the impossible—and let it go at that.

If it was with a somewhat fearful interest that we surveyed the obstacles we had come so far to ride over, there was no qualification whatever of the beauty of the greenest green fields, emerald as far as the eye could reach, that

exist anywhere on earth. It is true, what we had heard: that Ireland's green pasture has a different hue from the grass of any other land. It is richer, more velvety, more eloquent of deep, dark, moist and life-creating soil beneath. The loveliness of the land increased as we progressed south around a flank of the Galtee Mountains, seen purple through the soft, misty atmosphere, and with great mile-wide patches of brightness on their heather-covered slopes where the sun found stray passages through the clouds now assembled. In exquisite contrast with the emerald sod of field after field was the orange-yellow blossom of ever-present gorse on the banks and in clumps and larger patches, acres in extent, where the fertile grasslands thinned out into the slope of a moorland, or surrounding a brown bog. But of trees, none; or so few that some lonely, stunted sentinel or thin little isolated group on a hill only accentuated the absence of forests.

A six-hour journey on a train is, normally, an accursed thing to me, with longer ones in proportion, but we were so full of eager interest in the countryside; in the bounds and characteristics of the hunts we were passing through; in picturesque peasant women, draped in the inevitable long, dark shawls at the rail-

road stations; in the little low stone cabins with thatched roofs, proud roosters leading their convoys of hens in or out of the doors,—that we did not even have time to get through a chapter of "Pendennis," and were half disappointed when the train slowed up into the Cork station.

A row of jaunting car drivers yearned for our patronage, but we climbed into the hotel bus, our luggage was chucked up on its roof and we were deposited in a few minutes at the door of the Hotel Imperial. Ned Costine, our head groom at home, fresh, a year before, from the County Cork, had told us that this hotel was the one patronized by hunting people in the South of Ireland and how from it we could reach with comfort the meets of the "United," the Muskerry and the Duhallow, as well as countless packs of harriers.

In London our English friends had hooted and jeered at our proposal to spend a month in a South Irish hotel. "You will go to the Imperial," they said, "and stay two hours, not more. Then you will try another hotel for about an hour and leave that; the third and last one you will put up with for half an hour and then you will catch the first train or boat for England and come back to the Berkeley."

These dark prophecies did not disturb me too much, as I have spent a two weeks' vacation in a West Virginia mountaineer's cabin where two rooms housed twelve people and found it bearable for the sake of the turkey shooting. But as a matter of fact the Imperial was almost ideal from a sportsman's standpoint, with quiet, freedom, service ranging from reasonable in the bedchambers to excellent in the dining room; a delightful array of excellent, simply cooked food and last, but not least, the incomparable "Flurry," dean and paragon of Irish hall porters. Flurry literally knows everyone in Ireland south of Ulster and a majority of people in the North and everyone knows him and has a joke with him—lords and ladies, tradesmen and the most disreputable vagabond poachers. Say "Flurry, at the Imperial," anywhere in South Ireland and you get a smile and a story, instanter.

Flurry was a powerful, thickset man; he had in his youth been the champion boxer of the South; when lesser menials struggled at the entrance with a trunk too heavy to lift on top of the bus, Flurry would march out and sling it up single-handed, to the delight of that part of Cork's populace that happened to be in the street. He had a broad, ruddy face, little eyes,

very hairy eyebrows that gave a ferocious turn up at the outer ends and a scowl even more ferocious, which he assumed when he was being particularly amusing or obliging. I asked him his age after a close *entente* had been established. "That's the wan thing I don't tell annybody, not even yourself, Sor," he said, "for I have a very young and prutty wife, and she might hear of it."

He came from near Killarney, in the adjoining County of Kerry, and was reputed to be a wealthy man, holding a large part of the stock ownership of the Imperial; but he was on his job and on his feet about eighteen hours out of the twenty-four and nothing was too small or too large for him to attend to with promptness, efficiency and, generally, a bit of humor thrown in for good measure. We wanted to charter a Ford for the month; in fifteen minutes Flurry had waiting on me a respectable young Irishman, the proprietor of a new Ford sedan, and was adjuring him, after fixing him firmly with his little eyes, and with hideous scowls, to "treat the gentleman roight." The negotiations closed with the Ford and a driver at our service at all times, the cost to be a shilling a mile, no charge for waiting and no obligation on our part to make

any more mileage than we chose, an arrangement that worked out very fairly for all concerned.

Finding, before we had made friends in the community to invite me to fish their waters, that there was salmon fishing right at hand, I asked Flurry if there was any way I could get a day on the river Lee, or whether all the salmon water was preserved. "Tell me wan day before you want to go, anny time," he said, "and everything will be ready for you on one of the best stretches, rod and tackle and gillie and all," and so it was. Then Flurry began to tell of a great salmon that lay in a pool right forninst his home in Killarney, about the time when he was a boy of fifteen,—a noble fish that would not be lured by any vanity compounded of feathers. "I would lay on me belly," said Flurry, "on a flat rock on the shore of the Big Pool an' watch him loomin' on the bottom as still as a log wid just only his big gills workin' and workin', slow and regular. Once in a long whiles he rose to an inseck and his wake would be such that the waves that was in it would come rushin' across to the shores and slap up ag'inst the rock I would be lyin' on." The saga continued to the effect that, despairing of the fly, Flurry got him some

prawns; but his old man had taken the rod that day and Flurry had only a reel and line. He cast out the hooked prawn with his hand so cunningly that leviathan took it—and the battle was on. "I ran wid him a good quarter mile up stream, and then, be me sowl, a half mile down; three times he had all but the last turns of the reel shtripped off and me cryin' like a baby. But I bate him, Sor, an' wid no gaff and no gillie; when he turned on his side I pulled him into some shallow slack and fell in on top of him and locked him wid me arms and legs. Clean run, Sor, forty-eight pounds and shaped like an artis' model."

The season opened on the river Lee on February 1, two days after we arrived, and thereafter we had grilled salmon, netted not two miles away from our breakfast table, seven days of the week. As I had already fallen violently in love with Irish bacon as a breakfast dish and as the sole taken within a few miles were the best in the world, there was some embarrassment at the morning meal until a few long days over the "banks" brought appetites that saved the situation. Roast pheasant was another item of the Imperial's menu to remember long and lovingly, and of the best Irish whiskey, judiciously qualified with apollinaris,

it is best to keep silent, as I am not acquainted with any words adequate to work but a travesty of justice to it, taken after eight or ten hours in the saddle in the County Cork and a much-needed, luxurious bath and change of clothes.

The Imperial is a large, rambling stone structure, very old. The lady in charge of the front desk showed us apartments of state, two huge bedrooms and a "sitting-room" that must have been forty by thirty feet, but I decided we would seek a quieter location and she finally settled us in a back wing of the mediæval structure, B with a room large enough for three ordinary bed chambers and me next to her in a smaller but still ample apartment. These quarters were entirely off to themselves, with no neighboring guest within hearing and we had almost the privacy of our own house, with no one to dispute occupancy of the bathroom near by.

Of course there was no "central heating." Not even the Berkeley, in London, was equipped throughout with radiators and I imagine it would be hard to find in South Ireland a radiator system such as overheats the humblest of our American cottages in or near a town of Cork's size. A small grate in each

room and cunning little close-lidded scuttles of "coals," with a small extra charge for each fire lighted, was the rule everywhere, even in the best appointed homes.

I had dropped in temperature about twenty degrees as soon as we landed at Plymouth and, in a sense, was cold for the next two months and a half, except in the brief intervals when, after a day's hunting and dinner, we would roast ourselves before the little grates, bellowsed into red heat and all the flame the chimney would carry.

But one grows to like it; at least we did. We never felt better in our lives and went unscathed through exposure and rain and soaked riding boots and cold northerly winds in the hunting field which I am sure would have brought on trouble if we had been inhabiting American superheated houses. The one drawback was getting into icy cold, damp-feeling, morgue-like beds after 90% of one's vitality had been expended in furious scrambles across country all through the day, the remaining 10% being engaged in a life or death grapple with the digestion of a fabulous dinner. This is really serious, but fortunately I had been forewarned by Dr. Shaw, who said truly, before we left America, that the one and only abso-

lutely indispensable article for European travel in winter is a dependable hot water bag. We had such and we could not have existed without.

Larking in the County Cork

WE arrived at the Imperial Thursday afternoon, eagerly unpacked our hunting togs and telephoned to the man from whom we hoped to get horses, making an appointment to lark across country on Friday and get our first introduction to the banks to be ready for the Saturday hunt. I had wirelessed from the steamship to him when we were passing Queenstown, five days before, and received word in London that he would have mounts ready for us.

So Friday morning found us in Carrigtwohill, at the home of the Rohans. Jerry Rohan, who had died suddenly, at the Hunt Ball, a year before, had been a well-known and universally liked and respected horseman in South Ireland, the largest dealer and a real sportsman. I had known of him first through his sending our much loved Harry Browne to America in charge of a consignment of horses and, later, had corresponded with him and secured for our stable management Ned Cos-

tine, who had been Rohan's head man through many years.

The Widow Rohan, a dignified and fine-looking matron, obviously still under the shadow of her popular husband's death, lived with her four children in a comfortable old house with large grounds near the shores of the estuary of the River Lee, which, in a "windy" and narrow course gradually broadens and develops into the harbor at Queenstown. The horse end of the father's business was being carried on by the son Eamonn (pronounced "Yahmun"), a bright boy of nineteen, who with his elder sister's aid also kept up a bit of a manufacturing plant producing concrete blocks for building purposes, their land having a gravel pit with exceptionally fine material.

Miss Peggy, the third child, was a rosy, round-faced little girl whom I took to be fourteen years of age, but B, who made friends with the family at once, told me she was eighteen. She rode astride, one of the very few Irish girls we saw doing it, and was just about the most fearless and dashing little horsewoman across country it has ever been my fortune to behold.

Eamonn first showed us his horses, not remarkable for beauty and on the coarse side,

with the powerful hocks and quarters and rugged strength of shoulder characteristic of the Irish type. They were animals for which he expected to get from £100 to £300 apiece, according to their looks, size and capabilities—perhaps a half or two-thirds as much as a high class dealer in America would ask for dependable mounts. I was surprised at their size, as the trappy work with banks and ditches seemed to point to a compact horse of more moderate height. He explained that England was the great market for Irish horses and that the English people would not buy, or at any rate, pay good prices for any but big horses—agreeing with me that for working demands 16 hands would be better, as an average, than 16.2 for either Ireland or England.

We larked the horses we would ride next day, B on a brown thoroughbred mare with long mane, not too ravishing in appearance, but a really clever performer that could gallop, jump and stay. I was on a short-tailed, cobby-built big animal of the true old Irish type, with a leg-spreading middlepiece, lumpy in his gaits and heavy of mouth, also with a suspicion of soreness in front, but with a world of power in his quarters and more foot, when things really began to happen, than one would sus-

pect. I had in all communications with hirers-out and friends who might mount us, carefully explained that B was as good as they came and should be mounted accordingly, if possible—and then, somewhat ashamed of bragging so openly of B's gifts, added that I was a doddering old man with a quartet of broken ribs not fully set and that I had never been much of a horseman anyhow, so that anything would do for me if it was "steady," in other words, if it did not pull or play up too much. As a consequence, I got just about what was indicated, or a little more so. I finally got tired of telling the truth so gratuitously and proceeded to get the best horse I could persuade any one to hire me. As a matter of fact, I got on better with the higher class of mounts than with the stodgy, heavy-mouthed ones; four of the five "purlers" I figured in through the two months of hunting were with the loutish, over-"steady," horses that fitted my self-advertisement. The more sensitive, active, higher-strung animals gave me less trouble and did not come down.

Another matter worthy of remark is that whereas we had been universally warned in America by experienced friends, Irishmen, that their countrymen considered any horse a "good" horse that would go boldly and "stay"

across country, regardless of his manners, his pulling or running away, and that we must carefully stipulate "steady" horses—yet out of twenty-nine different hirelings and borrowings we rode to hounds in Ireland and England, we did not find one that pulled, the nearest to that character being a thoroughbred in England at concert pitch of training for a coming steeplechase, which B hunted in a snaffle through a long day with the Blackmore Vale with no trouble but a bit of extra watchfulness.

Young Rohan took us up narrow boreen alleys and through gaps into and out of fields of green turf, unbelievably elastic and delightful footing, to some high-lying farms fenced with banks less formidable than the average. He coached us a bit, particularly in the matter of going slow at our jumps during the last two strides. This is a *sine qua non* of bank jumping and must be learned by main force by American horsemen used to approaching their own "fly" fences in a flippant gallop or canter. Once in a while one finds an Irish horse that has such supereminent coordination of muscles and nerves, such cool, accurate and quick observation of what is in front of him and such jumping agility and power, that he can go at his banks "fast" or "slow" and yet safely; but

he is a rare bird, indeed, and one does not ordinarily hire such.

We set off at a gallop across a pasture field, headed for our first bank, a ditch on the take-off side, Rohan giving us a lead. Two or three strides from the obstacle his horse slowed down, paused for a moment on the edge of the ditch, settled square back on his hocks (his rider leaning well back in the saddle), and sprang to the top of the bank, where there was another pause, while he changed legs neatly and improved the opportunity by learning that there was no ditch on the landing side; then straight down a bit of a drop, Rohan sitting on the cantle of the saddle, his upper parts inclined back above it, riding with very short leathers and a strong hold on his horse's mouth. He had a beautiful riding figure, a horseman's temperament and had ridden to hounds since he took off dresses.

B followed instructions, in her characteristic manner, as to steadying her horse, but kept the forward seat when it collected itself on the ditch side, dropped her hands for a light feel of the reins and maintained that arrangement throughout the transaction, with more grace as well as ease to the horse, I thought, than were afforded by Rohan's style. I, too, managed

to steady my mount for the jump, but a bit too late, causing him to make his effort with some superfluous excitement. He planted his fore-feet somewhat down on the incline of the ditch, settled back on his hocks, paused for what seemed to me several æons, and then with a mighty heave, catapulted himself and me over ditch and bank, kicking strongly back against the top of the latter, instead of decorously landing on it and changing legs. The lusty kick-back was a minimum concession to safety and a means of extension over the possible ditch on the landing side. "He's not going well, he's jumping too big," was Rohan's comment on my chestnut's performance and the creaking of two of my Virginia ribs entirely confirmed his opinion so far as my own feelings went.

B Rohan regarded somewhat curiously and, I flattered myself, respectfully; but he was evidently inclined to think that there was much luck in her passage over the bank so smoothly without using the reins in the least as a support, or "sitting back." Whereupon, began inevitably the classic and timeworn debate on the respective merits of the forward and the "sitting back" seat, an argument that lasted for two months, or until we sailed for home,

with the usual result of leaving each side to it more firmly convinced than ever that the other fellow was wrong. We found men like Captain C. in southern England, an M.F.H. and noted steeplechase rider, who did not even know there was such a thing as a "forward seat" style in hunting and steeplechasing. "Well, of course you 'swing' at your jump, don't you?" he asked, meaning by "swing" a backward movement of the upper part of the body that only ends, during fast and furious work, when the rider's shoulders bump on the horse's croup.

After the first few score banks B and I negotiated in Ireland we were, to be sure, inclined to compromise this far: in riding over the Irish bank and ditch countries, an *extreme* forward seat is highly inadvisable, because of the deep drops that occasionally come as a complete surprise, owing to the cutting off of observation by the banks. Moreover, the Irish horse, having changed legs on top of the high, steep bank and finding no ditch ahead, drops down very straight from the top, making it necessary, in quick work, to lean well back in the act of landing. Also we found a horse or two in England so used to supporting their riders through the medium of the reins that they

could not get it through their heads when given a free mouth that jumping was intended at all. With such there is nothing to do but to ride them as they are accustomed to be ridden: on approaching a jump, to take a firm hold of their mouths and keep it throughout the effort.

On their part, the Irish, men and women alike, were kind enough to say that they would ride any way, forward or back, astride or side-saddle, with a light feel of the reins or a strangle hold, if they would get the results that B got. When in the after days our hunting field was negotiating an awkward jump, hounds not running at the time, from twenty to fifty riders would maneuver so as to watch B come over; with equal kindness, they would go about their business before my own effort began.

Our First Irish Foxhunt

THE larking on Friday left me with some ugly rib reminders and some lack of understanding still as to how a big field of riders could follow hounds at full speed over banks, ditches and boreens that would be much more variegated and difficult than the very moderate ones we had schooled over.

So that it was with a nice adjustment of eagerness and edgy nerves that we put on our hunting things Saturday morning and climbed into the flivver for our first hunt, with the "United," the meet being eight or nine miles away.

B had taken care to remove from her coat the orange collar of our home hunt colors, and I wore the regulation "visiting" dress of American custom—dark oxford grey coat, cream colored bedford cord breeches, plain black jack boots and hunting bowler. I have never become an authority on the niceties of hunting etiquette and was simply aware one could not go amiss in these unpretentious togs. Those

striving for thorough mastery of old world technique in hunting dress may be interested to know that I found it would have been considered perfectly proper in both Ireland and England to appear in pink coat, top boots and the colors of our home hunt, while in the former country an M.F.H. we hunted with said that it would have even been in order for me to wear, if I wished, my velvet Master's cap, ex-officio. In England the last item was more carefully analyzed: the cap was not in the best taste unless the visitor was or had been a master of a *neighboring* pack, and the proper garb for a stranger from distant parts, whatever his official status at home, was a pink coat, home colors and a top hat.

Our flivver soon began to overtake people bound for the meet, gentlemen and ladies jogging along on short-tailed beasts with enormous quarters and hocks, grooms leading horses with their riderless saddles always carefully protected by slip covers from the showers, which appear in South Ireland without a moment's notice or a discernible cloud; showers that pass away, generally, as quickly as they come, with no one paying the slightest attention to them.

The meet was at "Kerney's Cross," the word

"cross" signifying in Ireland crossroads. The inevitable "pub" and a picturesque low stone cottage or two, with thatched roofs, disgorged their entire population of young and old of both sexes, humans and dogs, to study the proceedings with silent absorption.

The hounds and hunting staff, except the Master, Mr. Russell, were already there; mounted on a gigantic and powerful white bobtailed horse with hinderparts that suggested a brewery wagon team, the Huntsman, sixty-five-year-old Dinny McCarthy, looked the part, with his ruddy face and snapping keen blue eyes, to absolute perfection. We found later that he was a cracking good huntsman, too, despite his years and a tendency to stoutness.

In a few minutes eighty or ninety men and women had arrived, with something near an equal number of each sex. All the women were on sidesaddles except B. Perhaps fifteen or twenty of the men were turned out complete in pink livery. There were as many farmers, dressed in any fashion, with leggins or boots, some elderly men and boys in mufti and three or four priests in black, shovel hats and leggins. One of the last, Father S., whom we hunted with frequently during the following month, was seventy years old and had ridden with

these hounds for thirty-eight of them. His home was in a distant part of the United's country and he often had to hack fourteen miles or more to the meet, and back even farther at times, after hunting furiously all day.

I was surprised to find so large a field and one so well turned out, as in England it was thought that Irish hunting was going on in a very small way since the troubles, the worst of which centered right where we were, in the County Cork. The most aristocratic figure in the field was the young Marquis of Waterford, a blond, handsome young man of twenty or thereabouts, well over six feet, of the broad-shouldered, lean-flanked type, with impeccably perfect horsemen's legs and spotless equipment —looking, altogether, almost too much like what a young hunting Marquis should look like. A considerable percentage of the field and a great majority of the pink coats were made up of officers, generally Irishmen retired from the British Army and living in Ireland; for instance, the tall, grizzled General Sullivan, with many years of service in India, an attractive and hospitable warrior who lost no time in calling on us at the hotel and in putting me up at the County Club, just around the corner from the Imperial. Major Berry was another; he

and his wife promptly asked us to their house, as did Mrs. Major Chute, who, with her husband, was constant in the hunting field. She was an extremely pretty and vivacious little person, apparently not much older than B, to whom she was exceptionally kind, acting as her chaperon at the dances given every few days in the ballroom of the Imperial and leaving me free, on those occasions, to take my weary, frozen and bunged-up bones to bed and hot water bottle.

Mr. Murphy, an influential brewing magnate, was very courteous and friendly. He was probably sixty-five years of age and rode at about 250 pounds, but knew the country like a book and the ways of foxes; he was well mounted, too, and could ride, being entirely ready to go at anything that really needed to be jumped. He proved an ideal man for me to follow in the confused first hours of my bank experiences.

Mr. Russell, the Master, having arrived in his car with his wife, we were introduced to him and pleasantly welcomed. The hunt jogged on a half-mile to a small covert of gorse, shoulder to head high, on the flank of a "glen," as the frequent picturesque, treeless ravines are known in Ireland. Hounds were

inducted into this prickly thicket to the accompaniment of more whip cracking than would have served to stimulate the hunting eagerness of an American pack; the field taking up positions about where its members chose, in very casual fashion. A fox was immediately on foot and tally-ho'd away a few minutes later, only to be brutally headed by some of the encircling riders. The Master burst out of a narrow "ride" in the gorse to curse them and their ancestors to high heaven even unto the third and fourth generation, the culprits moving leisurely back to something like correct position with unashamed grins on their faces.

Followed for ten minutes or more games of tag and hide-and-go-seek in the gorse, with excited, yelping hounds and every now and then a "Tally-ho" and a "Tally-ho back," as some member of the field would catch a glimpse of the tawny ghost flitting through his private paths amid the tangled stems of the gorse. Finally he found refuge in an earth of sorts on the lower edge of the covert, from which he was evicted and at last sent away. Pandemonium broke loose; the field was too badly scattered for a good getaway, most of us being on the brow of the glen and the fox leaving by the other and lower side, with the gorse itself

impenetrable to a galloping horse. I got a fleeting fraction of a view of the varmint as he sank the opposite hill which made me take a chance on his going left-handed; and so galloped down the glen with the gorse on my right, while most of the field went around the other end of the covert. A bit of a water jump and clods of mud in my eyes from the bottom of the glen; a steep struggle up the far side; a small bank which my horse "flew" in heterodox style; a lovely, fast gallop over perfect turf and I was with hounds, as was B, who appeared from goodness knows where. The scent was too burning and the hounds too close; they rolled over the fox not ten minutes after he had left his happy home. The mask was presented to B. We are both sorry that this otherwise satisfactory culmination did not follow a two hours' run, "the hunt of the season," but this little history, prosy and long-drawn out, must at least be veracious.

The kill was not more than enough to get one's blood up, but this it did accomplish. A second gorse covert was drawn some two miles farther, a thicker, higher growth covering perhaps five or six acres,—so tangled that it took hounds some time to bustle out their fox.

While they were threading the intricacies of the thicket, woodcock began getting up out of it in singles and pairs until I had marked more than thirty—splendid big birds weighing just about twice as much as our American cock. Whistling and curving past me within respectable gun shot, I could scarcely sit still in my saddle for excitement.

But just as we were fearing that this fox, too, was a reluctant traveller, "Tally-ho, away!" sounded; there were bloodcurdling yells from dozens of country folk, "foot people," who suddenly appeared from nowhere—and ninety men, women and horses, getting away to a good and fair start, saw red and went utterly crazy—oblivious of everything on earth and in life here and to come except, by any means whatsoever, to get forrard and closer to hounds. This was a "good" fox, one of the best. His line might have been drawn along a straight-edged ruler and the scent was good; no slow hunting and virtuous claims, in check, that one really got just as much pleasure out of seeing hounds work patiently as in riding like the devil. We rode like the devil and "we" means everybody—men and women, farmers and majors, brewers, priests and Yankee nonde-

scripts. Never before or since have I seen ninety people, to a man and woman, in the first flight. There wasn't any other flight.

Gone utterly into limbo were the doubts and anxieties as to banks. One's soul sailed serene in the blue empyrean (reminding one of Mr. Jorrocks' longing "to 'over over the 'ounds like a heagle!"), the only question in all cosmos being "is this place better to jump than that?" —a question to be answered immediately and at it.

The farm fields in the "United's" country are very small—the smallest we saw anywhere in Ireland or England. They were fenced in this section with big strong banks, which are safer, as a matter of fact, than crumbly or "narrow" banks, difficult for any but a very clever horse to change legs on. I should judge that with the fields so small the banks would run twenty-five to the mile, at least, and this fox made a six-mile point to the nearest moorland. A simple calculation gives a very tidy bit of jumping as the result. You sailed, dropped, slid or wallowed down from the top of a bank only to begin, as soon as you were sure you were still in contact with your horse, to study the next obstacle just ahead. If my animal had not had enough of a veteran's wis-

dom to check speed in approaching his jumps, I should have been destroyed a dozen times in the instinctive reversion to flippant American onslaughts suitable only for flying stone walls and rails. Over and over again it would seem as if collapse impended on a bank that gave but little footing, only to feel a dexterous change of legs beneath one and a successful spring out over the ditch beyond.

Once I fairly yelled as I came to the top of a bank (feeling like our unfortunate visitor with the Fairfield and Westchester Hounds, "it iss ze end!") at the totally unexpected apparition of a second bank within ten feet of the one I had jumped to, a deep boreen hidden between the two. Even as my subconscious reflexes pulled the cord for the howl, I caught a glimpse of B and Eamonn Rohan grinning at me as they went over to the right, where the second bank of the boreen petered out; the next moment my horse by a quick turn had found a negotiable gap my eye had not caught in the flurry.

In the main I tried to follow the monumental figure of Murphy on his 16 stone chestnut, never trusting, on my own judgment, a likely looking place in a bank if I could possibly substitute his opinion. The factors of safety were

so totally different from those in American fences, fatally crumbly places in banks, loosened by rabbit burrows, were so frequent and so slightly advertised, that some experience was absolutely necessary to ride one's own line. Besides, my left eye was almost out of commission with the right one sympathetically below par and in the sweating frenzy the sum total of my vision left much to be desired for picking jumping places.

Once in a while would come an almost perpendicular stone-faced bank simply unjumpable except at a particular place, before which forty riders or more would jam like madmen, shouldering each other out of their places of priority, spurring and whacking courage into their horses and yelling imprecations at some refuser blocking the way. Not a vestige of consideration or etiquette; again and again I saw B arrive early at such a trappy place only to have her precedence snatched away by half a dozen rough riding farmers who, one after another, shouldered in ahead of her. There was nothing personal in it, no rudeness was in mind; you were expected to do the same thing if you had the chance.

For the most part the eighty-odd riders were galloping and jumping on a front that stretched

over two or three of the small fields, according to their respective hunches or their knowledge of the intimate details of the country. But at one point a pasture larger than usual was bordered by a villainous barbed wire fence, one of the few we saw in Ireland. This forced the field to converge to the one gap in the wire and it so happened that the entire crew arrived at just about the same time to jam through the fourteen foot opening. A movie of their progress through it would be priceless. The entire field arrived galloping, each determined to get through before the crowd; why a half dozen were not killed or forced into the wire on the flanks of the gap is a mystery unexplainable outside of Ireland. For an appreciable time no one could pass at all, because so many insisted on doing so. It was like nothing so much as a furious log jam on a swollen river. The innermost riders became fixed and helpless,—those on the outside and behind continued to press in and force the struggling mass into denser immobility. All were shouting advice to the ones in front and thrashing their neighbors' horses and their own with their crops. Presently a few freed themselves and got through, the posts guarding the gap were pushed over by the rush, widening the passage,

and all galloped on, each intent on finding a practicable place in the next bank before his neighbors found it.

There is just the one sovereign cure for nervousness as to strange obstacles: a burst like this with a field like the "United's," which was, I should say, quite the hardest riding lot we saw across the Atlantic, or on our side either, for that matter. It is quite magical to find the emotion of fear vanished entirely, simply forced out by stronger emotions. In thirty crowded minutes one acquires a total disregard of eventualities that could not possibly be achieved by three years of careful schooling in cold blood. In the one case you are proving, gloriously, with every nerve at concert pitch, that the thing can be done,—in the other, you are learning, scientifically, the factors that might prevent the thing from being done.

Five or six miles of the small green farm fields, bank after bank, hounds running as straight as the wild goose flies and we riding as straight as banks, boreens and the capabilities of horseflesh would allow—and I began to notice some wasteland and gorse. Presently we were galloping on a high, rather level moorland, with no fencing to speak of—only heather and stunted gorse clumps (over which our

horses insisted on jumping in a very unexpected and unsettling fashion) and shallow puddles of water. English snipe sc-a-a-ped up at every other stride and mallards rose out of the little wet places. At first I was anxiously careful about the footing, after the delectable turf of the farmlands, but it was soon apparent that although a bit heavy in spots there was a good bottom even in the puddles and the only care one had to exercise was to keep from being jumped off when one's horse bounded over a bit of straggly gorse instead of galloping through it, as one thought he should do. Subsequent closer intimacy with the stunted moorland gorse explained to me why the horses disliked so to let it touch their legs. Any spray of it would replenish the wardrobe of an average porcupine.

Here, on the moorland, scent was not so good and a bit of slow hunting relieved somewhat our steaming, perspiring horses and selves. I was wet with sweat to my outer clothing; my new bedford cords looked as if cattle had been tramping on them in a mudhole; out of my left eye I gouged a respectable portion of the ould sod of Erin; a white stock had become a polka dot; boots so punctiliously boned by the expert at the Imperial were

apparently beyond future redemption; the patched-up ribs had come loose in a frantic effort to stay with my mount down a deep and unforeseen "drop" before which his hind feet had slipped on top of the bank in such a manner as to bring him down in a sprawl, but, luckily, right side up. But all of it added to what was behind the smile B and I exchanged in commentary on our first Irish foxhunt.

The desultory gallop slowed down to a canter and that to a trot as hounds found their difficulties in the moorland scent. Presently they worked up to a thickety depression in the moor and marked this splendid fox to earth. To our great satisfaction he was not disturbed by terrier or spade. Our first hunt abroad was over; not, statistically, in minutes, miles, etc., an epoch-making run, but thoroughly a soul-satisfying one.

Our hazy idea that we were going to have a mighty good time in Ireland cleared right up into an overwhelming conviction.

We had arranged to have our flivver sedan follow the fortunes of the hunt around the roads as best it could and pick us up at the end of the day to save the long hack home, but our fox had been so ambitious and direct in his run that with a driver unaccustomed to this sort

of detective work the little car was nowhere to be seen. We turned our tired horses toward a bath and dinner, B riding and chatting with some gentlemen whose acquaintance she had made during the day and I with a middle-aged spinster and a typical Irish country girl of twenty-two, looking very bright and trim on her sidesaddle, considering what we had been doing. As we walked along, reports from cars passing us now and then intimated that our Ford, which they had seen and directed, would soon overtake us, but an hour of quiet hacking followed without its appearance. Finally Miss R, who was to join B and me in it when it should arrive, broke out with "Where is that damn sedan?"

"Don't curse it," I protested; "it is a bit stupid, but remember I owe it the pleasure of having this ride home with you."

She turned to give me a straight-from-the-shoulder glance of examination and remarked vigorously, "Ah, go awn!"

A half mile farther I commented on the beauty of some of the little country children running out of a cabin, their poetical, dreamy eyes very eloquent of the native Irish imaginative temperament.

"Yes," said Miss R, regarding them.

"When they are *little* things, some of the Irish girls are really very pretty."

This was too hot a scent for even my ancient and wearied faculties to pass over without giving tongue; I rallied my energies for a feeble gallantry: "Well," I answered, "the little girls are very well, but some of the grown ones look even better to me."

Another square, direct look of appraisal at my muddy and disreputable person and again, "Ah, go awn!" Then, after a silence of some moments, as one solely seeking information and with no ulterior implications: "Is Mrs. Lanier alive?" The tone of my assurance that Mrs. Lanier was "very much alive" preserved such a nice balance between cheerfulness and resignation that I think her Irish imagination was still faintly unsatisfied, but we let it go at that.

A South Irish Week End

THIS young woman and her sister of B's age helped us nobly in practical matters of management during our first week and B invited them to dinner at the Imperial and to the opera—which they were anxious to hear for the first time in their lives. An Irish opera company was filling a week's engagement in Cork, the particular attraction being the appearance every other night of a popular Cork lady, an ex-prima donna of the operatic stage, in her favorite rôles. When given their choice, the two country girls asked B to take them to hear what they naïvely called "Fust," and were frankly and gaily interested in B's tactful elucidation of the correct pronunciation. They mastered it after some false starts, but found "Mephistopheles" more formidable than the most infernal of their stone-faced banks, compromising on "the Divil."

The Cork opera house was packed; nothing short of the subterranean influence of the invincible Flurry could have procured us, on short

notice, the excellent seats we had. I judged that of the three thousand people present all but a hundred or so, country gentry and all, were as unsophisticated as our guests, who listened with an approximation of attention to our explanation of persons and plot while their eyes were drinking in details of the audience and their mouths were busy on chocolates. But there was as much noise and enthusiasm as there was ignorance; a fox going away in full view with the pack half a field behind and everybody riding on the tail of the hounds could not have evoked more tremendous shouts of exhortation and praise. In the prison scene the provincial cast pulled itself together for a great effort and got through it with really admirable spirit and more art than one was prepared for. It was interesting to note how, all ignorant as they were of music or Faustus legends, this audience felt at once and keenly the triumph of the transcendent trio; how the native sensitiveness of the Irish temperament responded to the successful finale, and trance-like attention (even bonbons "in process" remaining unchewed) broke into utter pandemonium when Margaret rose to the supernal climax.

The next day, Sunday, we were confronted, not by a day of rest for the community, but by

an actual embarrassment of riches in sporting opportunities. A Sabbath in the County Cork is, in the first place, signalized by meets of the harrier packs. There were advertised in the Cork papers no less than twenty-six official fixtures for harriers; there are more than forty packs, altogether, in the one county. The Sunday line seems to be drawn at the pink coat, i.e., official foxhunting, though it is a wavering and shadowy line, as the big 23-inch "Kerry beagles" used for harriers draw many fox coverts and the indignant foxhunters swear that the harrier people "flog the 'beagles' off hares." This is an exaggeration, as we proved in a dramatic day the coming week (of which more anon) with one of the best harrier packs; but it is true that the entire field out harehunting obviously hopes at every challenge of the hounds that it is a fox's line and not puss. This is one of the internecine Irish feuds that has always been and always will be.

If one's Sabbath resists the lure of harehunting—nineteen-twentieths of it is done on horseback, with rarely a pack maintained by foot people—one has the choice of various Sunday coursing meets. Every other countryman or group of countrymen one sees on the roads is hanging onto the leashes of greyhounds. In

Irish coursing there are scarcely more fatalities to the hares than there are to foxes in foxhunting; this is by no means the fault of the coursing people or their hounds, but due to conditions of the country and to the extraordinarily lusty and resourceful make-up of the Irish hare.

Aside from the harrier and coursing meets, a quiet Sunday in South Ireland includes salmon fishing, trout fishing and Homeric contests of the "hurling" teams, the national form of hockey—and just the two-fisted and tumultuous form that one would expect of the Irish. From what I saw of it I should say it was quite as full of incident and accident as their foxhunting and rather more so than Gallipoli or Zeebrugge.

Confronted by all these avenues to a peaceful and contemplative Sabbath we decided, this first week-end, to miss them all and took, instead, a long walk along the River Lee, which flows directly through Cork, with ocean-going steamers coming up the narrow channel to dock in the middle of the city.

Leaving the town behind, we walked up this charming stream, which rises in the hills of Kerry to flow through the County Cork to the sea at Queenstown. In a few minutes of

tramping it was no longer a commercial waterway but an exquisite salmon river, averaging thirty or forty yards in width, flowing for the most part through wide meadows of entrancing green and so clean of brush along the banks, with such promising pools and riffles and runs, that a fisherman's imagination could scarcely keep within bounds.

Shadows passing swiftly over the ground beside me, I looked up to see two swans flying overhead, within half a gunshot of us; white as the driven snow they were, with necks strung out so far that their heads seemed to be proceeding without association with their bodies, and immense wings in majestic rhythm. They headed for a wide and still pool in the river, lit on it, and paid no attention to us as we strolled past them sailing like full-rigged ships in the shade of trees bordering the stream. They are not disturbed in this country, except that boys or animal marauders sometimes rob their nests placed in rushy parts of the river, its estuary, or in the center of some quiet bog.

To an American the abundance and neighborliness of bird life in the South of Ireland is amazing. In a country with no forests or other extensive refuges, with a populace unanimously bent on sport, there are ten times as many birds

in evidence as with us, game birds appearing along the roads and around the houses under conditions which would make such a thing unthinkable in America. I have already spoken of the ducks, snipe and woodcock we flushed in foxhunting. In addition, great flocks of plover of both green and grey varieties were seen in the fields close by the roads, in every walk and ride; at low tide, tens of thousands of large curlew dotted the mudflats of the lower Lee right up to the city; at dusk the chorus of their weird whistlings as they gathered for the night was a thing to remember and to haunt one. Pheasants and partridges were on hand in and around the larger demesnes, while the treeless, heather-clad mountains kept their grouse packs to themselves. Outside of game-birds, one's eye was chiefly attracted by the veritable multitude of gulls following every plow at work in the fields and disputing with the crows the first inspection of the rich, dark, moist earth of the new furrows. The crows were of two kinds, one a bird very like our own black wiseacre and the "small crow"—a nasty, robber varmint showing some grey on its upper parts. The gulls would actually cover the newly plowed area with a blanket of white; they kept flying and fluttering along with the

plowman in entire confidence, lighting within a yard of his team and brushing his clothes and hat with their wings.

On this Sunday walk we more than once came across countrymen standing on the side of the road in attitudes which bespoke patient waiting on something at first undiscernible to the passerby. A moment's examination would show on the "bank" or stone wall across the road a cage containing a small bird, generally a linnet; closer inspection revealed a whitish substance smearing the twigs of bushes about the cage. These were bird catchers "liming" linnets, the little wild songsters coming to interview the caged ones only to get caught in the stickiness of the smeared twigs. We did not hear so many song birds in Ireland as in England the following month, but the thrush was everywhere and tuneful, though it was midwinter.

As one walked or rode or drove along the roads, a big black and white magpie, or a pair of them, would every now and then flop from the roadway or out of the growth on the banks, generally preserving a carefully calculated distance from humankind, to disappear quickly and mysteriously in some lower regions. It is accounted bad luck in Ireland to meet a mag-

pie; we noted during our single month from a dozen to a hundred each day and concluded that not even Ireland's record of bad luck has been sufficient to prove the legend.

There are no nightingales in Ireland and I did not see any skylarks—such exquisite features of our every hour in the countryside of South England in March. Considering that we were out-of-doors and in the fields virtually all day and every day for a month in Ireland, the scarcity of hawks, owls and all birds of prey other than such occasional outlaws as magpies and "small crows" was very noticeable as compared with America, especially in view of the vastly greater supply of birds and rabbits on which the *raptores* might have fed.

This scarcity of birds of prey I take to be a chief explanation of the abundance of bird life. Gamekeepers have been at work for generations and there are no forests to speak of to afford refuges for large carnivorous birds. As for the rest, a wonderfully favorable climate, never cold and rough enough seriously to embarrass birds in winter and not oppressively hot in summer, with consistently heavy moisture the year round to encourage vegetable and worm food,—complete the two factors which, every-

where, govern the supply of bird life—(1) security and (2) food.

This ever-present soft moisture in the atmosphere makes the views of hills and fields and distant mountains beautiful quite beyond description, in addition to keeping every grass field emerald green throughout winter and summer. All objects beyond a few hundred yards are softened and clothed with mystery. There are no garish days when things "jump out at you." Anything that might be raw or ugly is toned down by the subtle art of the misty atmosphere; what would be too obvious is veiled, and the imagination thereby stimulated. As we looked back down the winding River Lee at the buildings, even the factory portion, of Cork, the city itself was transfigured to a mystical allegory, with only its beauty unhidden by the soft whites and purples of the haze.

Speaking of moisture, we had been schooled by all the reports that came to us, from the inimitable "Experiences of an Irish R. M." and its fellow volumes to the recent pessimistic accounts of our London friends, to expect rain, dismal and endless rain, in South Ireland. But while we found rain aplenty, in the sense of frequent visitations, it was quite the reverse of

dismal and endless. One good, fierce, undeniable storm we had, sending the hounds home with no hunting; but that was absolutely the only day we lost in either England or Ireland during two continuous months of hunting. In the County Cork the rule in February was: a frost at night, but not enough to harden the ground; a sunrise exquisite as an orient pearl and a cloudless sky going to the meet. Towards midday, great clouds gather, making magnificent play of sunlight and shadow on the purple slopes of the Galtee Mountains, twelve or fifteen miles away. Then, with sunlight on either side of us, sometimes with no discernible clouds above, a soft shower fell, no one paying the slightest heed to it, and disappeared as quickly and whimsically as it had come. There was a total absence of the bone-searching rawness of American northeasterly rains. I heard complaints that the climate was damp and unwholesome; but it agreed with us famously, just relaxing enough to quiet down one's nerves and make bed and nine or ten hours of sleep a Mohammedan paradise after a mad day in the saddle scrambling over fields and banks.

Harehunting and Horse Jobbing

MONDAY brought us another day with the "United" and we decided that our new sensation would be a trial of Irish harehunting, as the next meet of the foxhounds was at a very distant point in the country. So to "Watergrass Hill" we flivvered, to the meet of Mr. Robert Hall's private pack of harriers. The Master was a slender, wiry, grey-haired man of seventy years, aquiline of countenance, with a singularly winning eye and smile under his velvet cap. He and his Whipper-in were, of course, in green and a dozen or so of the field of thirty or forty also wore the correct harrier colors. Mr. Hall gave B and me an exceptionally cordial welcome, saying how proud he was that we should come to hunt with him and evidently having very much on his mind the matter of showing us good sport. He had the pride of an Irishman and a sportsman in his fifteen couples of huge Kerry "beagles," and I think it would have been a hard blow to him if luck had been denied us

that day, as with the best-laid schemes of hounds and men, hunting luck may be denied.

But it turned out a red letter day; I think we enjoyed having it so even more for the intense satisfaction it gave our enthusiastic grey-haired host than for the sport intrinsically, which was of the very best and a revelation to us, who had not before followed a strong South Irish hare.

The Master made for some low-lying ground where stray rushes bespoke very wet pasture, a favorite place for hares to lie. The field of riders followed in more open order than in foxhunting to cover as much of each field as possible, as puss will often lie in her form and let a cavalcade pass within a few yards without stirring or being seen. The riders also aided the hunt staff by slashing at gorsy patches and other brushy places with their hunting whips, on the chance of startling a hare into action.

Belong long we "found," in the center of an open field of short turf; it was ground on which one could not imagine a ten-pound animal could secrete itself and at that the hare did not get away from her form until hounds and hunt staff had passed within ten yards of her, jumping up right under the bellies of the horses.

I had enjoyed a bit of harehunting in America at Millbrook with Mr. Oakleigh Thorne's harriers and we had made an attempt at it in Greenwich, with the Fairfield and Westchester Hounds. I have always thought that a big jack hare making his initial burst over good, clean, open going, after he had been thoroughly frightened in leaving his form, conveys the most startling impression of speed that one can get from the running of anything of flesh and blood —strikingly more than the smooth, sneaky getaway of the strongest and most ambitious fox —whatever the actual facts of their speeds may be.

Certainly this long-eared Irishman, ricochetting over the clean turf, reinforced the opinion. He was disappearing through the gorse covering a distant bank well before the hounds could be cast on his line. The scent was super-pluperfect, the air was torn with wild yells, the big black and tan "Kerry beagles" lay to it with ecstatic tongue—and we were off.

We were in a good bit of country, "light" as the Irish say, in contradistinction to "heavy" or deep, holding going, of which one strikes fearsome examples in some parts of South Ireland.

The banks were not quite so large as in our

splendid Saturday foxhunt, but were even more varied, with the insidious "narrow bank" tempting one now and again to "fly" jumping, an indulgence absolutely certain to lead into grief as soon as one finds an unsuspected ditch of respectable proportions on the landing side. A clever horse will often half "fly" such obstacles, coming to it fast and flippant and jumping without a touch of his forefeet, but with a powerful kick against the bank as he leaves it behind, to give him such added propulsion as will serve for extension over a possible ditch on the landing side.

Not having my guide, philosopher and friend, Mr. Murphy, at hand, I made shift, at the kind invitation of Mr. Hall, to follow him. I found my work cut out for me. He was bent on keeping with his hounds, any kind of bank to the contrary notwithstanding; cheering them on lustily, his lean but ruddy face flushed with joy and pride and effort, earthly obstacles were to him as if they did not exist. It was just all I could do to keep in his wake. The line was straight, the pace fast and divil a check. A glance to one side or the other when one got the chance showed that it was a crowded hour for every member of the field.

After two miles, perhaps, with hounds still

running straight, compact, to a beautifully consistent scent, without a vestige of the pottering and nosing I would look for, now and then, on a hare's line, I made up my mind confidently that we had changed to a fox and a jolly good one at that. But no sooner had I settled this to my satisfaction than our hare was viewed from a bit of a hill we galloped over, racing on, a field and a half ahead. Another ten minutes of straight, fierce going and again I became certain that the recently viewed hare was an accident and that we were foxhunting; again I was promptly corrected by the appearance of puss on ahead.

My former experiences in harehunting had led me, too, to look confidently for a ringing chase, of smaller or larger diameter, and my suspicions of fox in this point we were making were only refuted, again and again, by plain views of the gallant old Jack who was undeniably giving us this great gallop.

We decided afterward, with the help of Mr. Hall, who knew the country well enough to be authentic, that the point was an honest five miles. It ended on some hill pasture with patches of low gorse scattered about. The hounds were at fault here and if anything could have added to our estimation of the fine old

Master of Harriers, it was his decision not to push matters further to any chance there might be of finishing off puss. "She's too good a hare to kill," he decided; his hounds were rounded up with horn and whip, their Master beaming on them with such pride as was worth coming a few thousand miles to behold. We did not have to invent cause for our compliments on the exploits of the Kerries or for our amazement at such straight running in a hare. One tries to say something pleasant to a Master at the end of a day's hunt and one often has the impulse to lay it on extra thick when scenting has been abominable and a slow day, endless lifting of hounds and futile casts have tried a Huntsman's nerves to the uttermost. But experience teaches one that such amenities do not count for much unless the Master himself knows he has given good sport. Some Masters, I think, while polite in acknowledgment really prefer silence on the subject when all they have in answer must be apologetic.

When we reached the Imperial after this fine hunt, very ready for a warm bath and food, we found awaiting us Mr. Patrick Sheehan, from Mallow, twenty miles away. I had written to him concerning horses to hunt with the Duhallow. This well-known old Hunt, dating back

some 200 years, with a huge country chiefly in the County Cork, has kennels at Mallow and its meets were too far away to send on the Rohan horses each day.

Originally my thought had been to hire, if possible, four or five good hunters and a Ford car and to move around from one hunt to another, sending the horses by train.

We found such fine sport in the County Cork, however, and so fell in love with the people, the hunting and the sporting spirit all around us that we modified somewhat the itinerant program—especially as we soon realized that four or five horses could not begin to give us as much hunting as we wanted to crowd into a single month. As a matter of fact, as noted earlier in this recital, we hunted no less than twenty-nine different horses in the two months spent in England and Ireland.

So, if we found sport as good with the Duhallow as with the United, we would be content (with a day following the harriers, now and then) to do our hunting from the Imperial as a permanent base.

Mr. Sheehan, on getting my letter about horses for the Duhallow, had jumped on the train and come to see us. He was a typical South of Ireland horseman and horse dealer.

His brother Richard had been in America and this was fortunate for us because he had brought back such stories of B's prowess in the showring that Patrick, our visitor this day, took the journey to assure us we would be well taken care of. He worked himself up to his proudest offering, a proposal that B should hunt the cleanbred point-to-point winner, "Free Set," one of the best known horses in the South.

I was duly, if vicariously, flattered by such a suggestion, as the horse's fame had come to us before his owner's visit, but I was, naturally, inquisitive as to "Free Set's" manners and ways of going in the rôle of lady's hunter. A point-to-point racing star in the South of Ireland suggested brilliance and boldness rather than safety and comfort for a girl on her first hunt in a strange country. Sheehan assured me that "Free Set" would take care of B; something in his manner was sufficiently convincing to lead to the arrangement that she should hunt the race horse the second day, trying on the first occasion a grey mare of Sheehan's to which Dr. Healey, a very able "vet" at Middleton, had in hunting field conversation given an exceptionally good character. I was promised "something steady" and so, when we motored, Thursday morning, the twenty miles to Mallow

and to "Costigan House," the abode of the P. Sheehans, we were all set.

"Costigan House" had loose boxes as the chief view from its lower windows and they formed one end of the residence itself. Sheehan welcomed us, showed us the grey mare—nothing much to look at and sporting an honest-to-goodness big knee but, as we soon found out, a rare one to gallop and a joy over the banks; he passed with tactful speed over my mount, a veteran full of wisdom but now purged of all earthly passions and then reverently unveiled "Free Set," the only horse I saw on this tour that I yearned to bring back to America with me. Six weeks later I made a modest offer for him, but he had just won his fourteenth cross country race and his price was a bit more than was wise to give for a horse eight or nine years old, which might need a whole season in America to school him to new fencing conditions.

"Free Set" was a mahogany bay with black points; not in the least a challenging or impressive horse at first glance—indeed, a quiet, unobtrusive animal not more than 15.2 or 2½, but one of those that look a bit better every time your eye runs over them than they looked the last time. Great depth from wither to

brisket he had; a generous middlepiece, strong loins and bulging, well-muscled quarters, a lovely, flat bone and very short cannon; long, breedy front, neck springing out at the true hunter angle and shoulders with a ravishing rake back; legs clean as a hound's tooth for all his years of racing over Irish banks—legs with a certain hardness of texture and the deft, neat cut and set that one comes to associate with the outstanding well-balanced, agile, lepping horse of one's experience. Add to these charms a prominent, large, lustrous and quiet eye and you have before you one of those small but beautifully proportioned, tough and seasoned thoroughbreds that to my mind are the type of all types to do real work, do it well and for a long time.

With the Duhallow Hounds

TEARING ourselves away from the contemplation of "Free Set," we proceeded to the meet six miles away, the official hour being 11 o'clock. Our way took us through Mallow, where the Blackwater River, one of the best salmon rivers in the world, showed itself in flood, forcing us to drive through water two or three feet deep over the macadam road. Hounds were waiting at Doneraile, grouped before a very beautiful, ancient iron entrance gate leading into an extensive demesne.

J. R. Shepherd, Esq., Master and Huntsman of the Duhallow, had not been apprised of our coming and had never heard of us until we introduced ourselves at this meet, but his friendly words and manner made us feel we were welcome. He presented us to Mrs. Shepherd, who was hunting. They asked us some questions about ourselves and America and, I found out afterward, immediately passed word to Major A., the acting Hunt secretary, that we were to be exempted from the rite of cap-

ping—this on the score of my having been in an earlier decade a Master of Hounds, of sorts.

This practise of capping we found the great rule in both Ireland and England, for all non-subscribers to a Hunt. The "Honorable Secretary" invariably had it very much on his mind to miss no tricks and swooped down on every rider subject to the rule, generally at the meet, but later in the day in the case of late comers or anyone who had been overlooked. One pound sterling per day was the usual fee. With very small establishments the damage was ten shillings, while some Hunts exacted two pounds per day; a few, such as the Meath, for instance, three pounds, and the Duke of Beaufort's, three guineas per horse per day. As the Duke's country is an exceptionally heavy one, demanding two horses for a proper day's sport, each day's cap amounts there to an appreciable sum.

Shepherd we found one of the keenest of sportsmen, a quiet, hard worker and a very strong man over a country when it was necessary to sit down and ride to keep with his pack. He had 42 couples of typical English hounds, a shade smaller than the United pack, a very level lot with exceptionally good shoulders. On occasion they could cut out quite a pace.

We saw proof of this a week or two later when they fairly left us behind in an open country with good going, except for puzzling, trappy banks and ditches. On that day I galloped desperately beside the Master for several miles without establishing contact with the hounds, though we knew just where they were ahead. The massive construction of the English hound as compared with the American type—I should think the average foxhound in standard packs of the United Kingdom would weigh thirty per cent. more than the average American hound—does not prepare one for the pace the English product can show. They are religiously bred for speed; music, even, being sacrificed to pace. Their mute running surprises an American and we heard abroad no hound comment so frequent as that this breeding out of tongue had been carried too far in the effort to do away with everything that tended to interfere with speed. English and Irish both protested that they liked "music" and wished their hounds gave tongue more freely. It is true that in covert they do give tongue very respectably and it is also true that music is not needed for utilitarian purposes in the more open hunting on the other side as it is needed in our countries of extensive coverts and forests

and broken country, where it aids so materially, at times, to determine the whereabouts and direction of the unseen pack.

We found a somewhat smaller field of riders following the Duhallow hounds, thirty to fifty being the rule, and they did not seem such a mad-riding crew as the "United's"; but they were keen and plucky to a degree and included some charming people. A number of them promptly made themselves known to us in the quiet intervals of drawing or of hacking from one covert to another; Mr. Philip Barry and his nieces, the Misses Nagle, were especially cordial—typical bright, genial and friendly Irish gentlefolk, with the quick understanding and ready imagination of the race and a background of many generations of well-bred country gentry. They were lineal descendants of both Edmund Spenser, poet (The Faërie Queene) and Edmund Burke, worthies who spent parts of their lives near where we were hunting. Mr. Barry at once made sure that we were being cared for at Cork in the matter of Club facilities, etc., came to the city to call on us and saw that we were invited to spend some days at "Byblox," the charming home of Mr. Garett Nagle, at Doneraile.

Barry and his nieces and nephews were faith-

ful followers of the Duhallow hounds and helped at various points to make our own sport enjoyable. Another rider of the same name, but different family, made a rarely picturesque figure in the hunting field. Imagine Mr. Punch, increased somewhat in stature and seventy years of age, in a velvet Master's cap and a pink coat dating from the first issue of that historic periodical; mounted on a shaggy, short-legged pony, never jumping fences so far as you could observe, but always appearing from nowhere at psychological moments and places to attain which you had been riding and pumping your heart out—and you will have this ex-Master of the Duhallow. He had been Master first in 1886, being of the family which had officiated, off and on, since 1745; every bone in his body of any importance had been broken in innumerable falls, reducing his hunting operations to a stout pony, road riding and "gaps," but never have I seen anyone with such uncanny perception of the intentions of a fox and of its unseen progress over the country. His personality seemed to be projected into that of the varmint; the fears and hopes, the wind, the water, the dangers and avenues of escape that affected its fortunes all registered on his consciousness. He literally lived,

through the chase, the life of the hunted fox.

On this first day with the Duhallow we had an excellent run, marking our fox to ground. There had been rain, the country about Mallow was "heavy" as compared with the fields of the United and this day taking us by chance to the deepest section, we encountered some terrific going in spots, these rough places alternating with long stretches of lovely, though rather holding, turf.

At its worst, it was the trappiest and deepest country of our experience. At times it was nip and tuck whether one's horse could struggle through a quagmire or whether he would stay there. Sometimes these desperate flounderings would bring one to water which had to be jumped and of course under such conditions from a standstill. The banks, too, though not so large as some of those nearer Cork, were unkempt, varied and puzzling. Let it be clearly understood that this was only one section of the Duhallow country and that it had suffered from a recent heavy rain; we hunted with these hounds twice a week and found other meets and dryer conditions affording beautiful going; we got no more delightful sport anywhere in England or Ireland than with these hounds. The mud and rough going are cited here to

make the point that in Ireland and England there are trappy hunting occasions as well as in Virginia, New Jersey, New York and Connecticut. Several times in the two months B and I asked each other whether anyone in "The States" would think of trying to take horses through such vile obstructions as we were encountering at the moment.

Looking at Irish hunters in general as we found them in the South, there was much to criticize, using our American standards of breediness and quality, on the score of coarseness, although there were many exceptions to prove the rule. But when it comes to cleverness and carefree boldness, they are like the Irish people and excel all others. They meet such varied problems in the way of different kinds of banks and ditches and combinations of them, that only a clever animal can survive the experience. In flippant pluck they are amazing. An Irish hunter has to change his mind and his style, as he crosses his country, much more than an American horse jumping rail or stone fences, or than a Leicestershire hunter "flying" one hedge-and-ditch after another.

To illustrate their cleverness: several times in our month's hunting in the County Cork I saw a carefree Irishman spring across a ditch

to the top of a bank and perch there only to find out that there was no possible landing in front of him, and then twist around on the bank and pick his way along it until he could jump off at a negotiable place. One horse did this life-saving trick with me after I had resigned myself, at the sudden sight of what confronted us on the other side, to complete disaster, and without the slightest suggestion from me or knowledge on my part that the thing was possible.

As a rule, both Irish and English horses were hopeless at rail fences and nearly so at stone walls. They simply didn't know how to do it. In Southern England we were hunting with a field of over a hundred riders when they came to a rail fence, certainly not over three feet eight inches in height, which for a time stopped the entire lot. B and I sat on our horses quietly to observe and marvel at the exhibition. The Master got three refusals and then broke the top rail, leaving about three feet to be jumped. A score more of refusals followed; when horses were finally spurred over, most of them leaped wildly into the air and landed on all four feet at once—the performances of the riders being, as a rule, as weird as their

mounts. Neither horses nor riders knew how to do it and were clearly rattled.

Let it be clearly understood that it is only the rule that is here emphasized; of course there are exceptions, capable timber jumpers, in both England and Ireland. I dwell on the point because it has an important bearing on the growing habit of American hunting men of importing horses from Ireland. One must not fail to remember that a brilliant performer over an Irish country may or may not be a good conveyance over American fences. Some take to the new conditions, others do not. My own opinion is that it is not worthwhile to take the chance with an Irishman thoroughly experienced with banks, but that a young horse with practically his entire future before him is the thing to get if one is going to bring an English or Irish hunter across the Atlantic. We tried but one Irishman, a clean-bred eight-year-old, which we knew to have gone through three exacting seasons in Limerick with much credit. He did not know how to refuse anything his head was turned to—in my mind a very questionable virtue—but if he ever jumped an American fence for us without hitting it, I was not there to note the accident. He would

break the rails if they were breakable, drag down stones from the top of a wall or in his more fortunate attempts rap the obstacle fore and aft. He was so unbelievably cat-like and clever that he rarely fell even when by all the rules of the game there was nothing else to do—but my pluck wasn't up to his.

Drawing an Irish Demesne

OUR second day with Mr. Shepherd was a particularly enjoyable one, B having the redoubtable little race horse "Free Set" and I being promoted to the grey mare, which showed the quick, responsive temperament of our own horses in America and which won, before the day was over, my honest admiration.

This meet was in a different part of the Duhallow country, with better going, though here and there was some deep work in crossing water courses. After drawing blank a gorse or two we entered the estate of Lord Castletown for our first experience in demesne hunting. The Irish demesnes are surrounded by ancient stone walls, often of exquisite workmanship and a quality of construction which could not possibly be duplicated today. These walls are generally from six to nine feet or more in height and sometimes of great extent, Lord Castletown's boundaries being about seven miles around. The demesne walls can rarely be jumped by hounds and never, prac-

tically speaking, by horses, so that when a reluctant fox is finally urged by the insistence of the pack to leave his happy home of tangled thickets of rhododendrons, jungles of vines, plantations of young larches and red osier-beds, there is a lively scramble and gallop for hunt staff and field to get through the nearest gate and take up the Traveller's line in the open country of farm fields and banks.

Our cavalcade hound-jogged down a winding demesne avenue bordered with noble beeches and oaks, immense well-kept grass-fields on the one hand and on the other a trout stream running through thickets, forest trees and dense masses of rhododendrons. Hounds were thrown into this picturesque growth, the field disposing itself at will over the endless stretches of lawn outside. A fox was afoot almost immediately, but as we found to be the usual thing in drawing demesne coverts, it was one thing to find him and quite another to bustle him out.

Now and again he would be viewed; agitated hounds which had been yelping in small groups through the rhododendrons would come together with incorrigible optimism as to the fox's intentions; the field would become infected with their enthusiasm and gallop

madly for a mile or so over the beautiful lawns in the direction of the full cry, only to have the varmint "tally-ho'd back."

Philip Barry was riding with me and telling me of the history, the extent and sporting resources of this demesne and I was at first amazed at the nonchalance with which he received these alarums of the chase; veterans like him get some uncanny instinct in foxhunting which enables them to disregard twenty false starts of the hunt, talking, enjoying the beauty of the morning and the countryside, chaffing their neighbors, beginning or ending abstruse and complicated horse deals—and then like a flash, although the symptoms seem to a less experienced person to be identically the same as those disregarded a score of times—they are electrified into furious action with no thought or interest except getting to the pack, which, sure enough, will at last be on the line of a departing fox.

It required, this day, the better part of an hour to get a fox safely away from the rhododendrons, but we had so much to interest us in looking over the magnificent trees, vast lawns, enticing trout rivers and lakes frequented by many varieties of wild ducks, that we did not begrudge the delay.

Barry wanted to introduce me to Lord Castletown; I am not much of a hand for "meeting" people, especially when, any moment, a good fox may set off across the country, but my companion kept it on his mind until I finally assented. We turned toward the great house, a few hundred yards away, only to meet almost immediately Lord Castletown with his secretary walking down to have a glimpse of the fun from the covert side.

He was a tall, spare man of eighty years, very straight for that age, with weather-tanned features and faded blue eyes that had not lost their keen directness of gaze. He wore a cap and an old tweed knicker suit which looked as if it were at least as old as his Lordship, with rough woolen stockings very palpably guiltless of garter support. I was presented as an American visiting Ireland in search of sport and found that Lord C. had been in America on many shooting expeditions and was writing a book in description of them. He was especially keen on duck shooting, saying that he and one other gun had killed seventy-two wildfowl the day before. I was able to straighten him out in one or two details of American ducks and duck shooting, for use in his book, and he was so much interested in the account I gave

him of the wildfowl at our Westchester, Connecticut, preserves that I got somewhat nervous over the messages that constantly reached our ears from the rhododendrons, a quarter of a mile away.

But, as was before noted, in Ireland everything turns out all right and it is a waste of nerve force to get anxious. We finally rejoined the field of riders; immediately "gone away!" sounded on the Master's horn and from the throats of riders and scores of hangers-on, employees in the demesne—and off we galloped, to crowd through the nearest gate onto the public roadway. Having accomplished this, we were faced with prompt trouble. On the side of the road opposite the demesne wall loomed a bank, beyond a roadside ditch, that did not look jumpable. To turn one's horse around in the narrow thoroughfare and ask him to jump and scramble to the top only to arrive there, if arrive he could, onto a wicked congregation of stout, sharp stubby gorse stems, cut off a foot or so from the earth, did not seem to me reasonable. Everybody was galloping frantically to and fro, getting in one another's way and finding each new place in the bank worse than the last that had been examined. A lady made an assault on the

monstrosity; her horse got two-thirds of the way up and fell back into the ditch. Seeing out of the tail of my eye that she had gotten clear, I, preferring discretion to valor, galloped along the road down-wind, on the chance that if the fox bore one way or the other, it might well be to leeward. Several riders joined me as I pushed through a providential gate; the grey mare knew just as well as I what we were in for, and in a few minutes I sighted Shepherd's pink coat two or three fields ahead, pausing in midair while his horse changed legs on a bank. I was aware of B in the vicinity—that young person and I frequently have opposite views as to the best line to ride, my judgment being invariably superior to hers, but she generally getting there first—I was conscious for the first time in the Old World of being well mounted and there followed what was to me perhaps the most thoroughly satisfying hour of our two months.

The grey mare could gallop; she took hold only so much as to show her *joie de vivre* and that her heart was in the game; anything her head was turned to she would jump with exquisite springiness and no brutal, jerky heave. She combined to a nicety enthusiasm and boldness with observant caution. Her mouth re-

minded me of "Fairfield's," and that is the last word. I felt as if I were riding, not brilliantly, but better than I really knew how to ride. I knew she could get on terms with Shepherd and a little rise of ground showed he was with his hounds.

In the effort to reach him a very dubious bank loomed up and a half dozen men crowding in made me pull to one side to take the jump at a place of my own choosing. Just as the grey got "the office" to go to it, one of the riders on my right had a refusal and his horse came bucketing and plunging down the ditch, left-handed, directly in front of my chosen place of assault. The grey mare put on the brakes handsomely until the intruder was out of my way and we started again. A second time a refuser did the same thing and we stopped on the edge of the ditch. I got a third start and came on with a yell of warning so murderous that we were given right of way; the mare made a great leap across the ditch and clean to the top of the ugly thing, changed legs like a fairy and lit safely down a sizable drop.

By this time I loved her with my whole heart. In a few minutes there was only a decent interval between her and Shepherd's horse ahead

and this foxhunt was at concert pitch, if not a bit above it.

One could feel that the grey had something in reserve and I moderated her raptures to keep about half a field behind the Master. As I did so, I was half-conscious that his big chestnut made a queer-looking jump over the bank ahead. As we approached, it developed into one of the dreaded "narrow banks," with the usual ditch on the take-off side and one knew not what at the landing. Not much over four feet high, it was so narrow on top—about eight inches—that it did not seem possible a horse could land on it and change legs; while to "fly" it would be to gamble with fate, in the uncertainty as to a ditch beyond. Instinctively I slackened speed somewhat and simply asked the little mare to go on and get over into the next field, truly without the slightest idea as to how she should go about doing it. Not a moment did she hesitate; up over the ditch she sprang, lit on the narrow top, all four feet clinging to it within its few inches of thickness as if she were a bird with capable claws; by some miracle got the change of legs and pushed off safely and without comment.

Pride cometh before a fall; it is part of the psychology of some foxhunters to confuse, in

the excitement of a fine run, their own merits with the horse's feats. I was a bit too carefree at the next bank and was not prepared to "sit back" down an exceedingly deep drop; I left my forward seat, all out of balance, for her neck and the slightest peck would have meant disaster; fate hung in the balance for an agonizing moment and then we established contact again much more by good luck than by good management.

A small river appeared in the meadow we were crossing, looking deep and uncertain of banks and bottom. We galloped along it through the holding turf until a fording place was found and splashed through, regaining hounds a half mile to the right. Almost immediately the line crooked around and hounds ran back to the river and recrossed it, going so fast that one got, subtly, a feeling that a kill was imminent. Everybody looked hard at the water and Mr. Shepherd turned his horse into it to take a chance. All went fairly well until he had nearly reached the other side. Then he struck a deep hole, his horse made convulsive efforts and by a lucky grip of his fore feet on the steep bank dragged himself out. The man following Shepherd was not so fortunate; his mount went down in the hole and

both rider and horse disappeared for a moment from public view. If this served *pour encourager les autres,* it had quite a different effect on me and I set sail along the river to the ford we had used before, a half mile down, just as I saw B in her deliberate way wading her horse in midstream, determined to put her fortune to the touch in Mr. Shepherd's wake.

When I, and others who were of my mind, had galloped around by the ford and caught up with events, the hounds were killing the fox; B proudly sported the mask.

We went to tea with Mr. and Mrs. Shepherd at their home near Doneraile, very wet, more tired and hungry and supremely happy. This old world institution of tea can never be appreciated as to its ultimate possibilities by anyone who has not had a long, hard and successful day of foxhunting, with dinner twenty-five miles and two hours away. It assumes certain proportions under these delectable circumstances quite unknown to the ordinary five o'clocker. For instance an egg is added and the orthodox number of thin slices of delicious buttered bread is multiplied by five, with real consciousness of virtue in not making it ten. There is a school of thought among hunting folk at tea that advocates a stiff drink of

whiskey and water before beginning operations; but generally I have steeled myself successfully against this cult, knowing by experience that it means two eggs and asking the maid for another great platter of bread and butter. It is not that one could not do without the consciousness of virtue; the serious thing is the danger that even the slightest shadow of edge might come off that priceless appetite for dinner later on, a thing too precious to be careless of. Breakfast at 8 or 8:30, two two-inch square thin sandwiches some time during the day while a covert is being drawn (or only one of them, the other being eagerly accepted by some acquaintance who "never did believe in taking food out foxhunting")—many hours of fierce, sweaty, muddy strife with thrill after thrill through half of them—and dinner becomes a sacred rite indeed.

As to the lunch out hunting, my experience is that it is a good thing to have a bite of something, merely to save the gastric juices, at their appointed hour, from utter disappointment. As often as not, getting out the liliputian sandwich is the signal for a fox to go away exactly while the food is on the way to one's lips; this last phase of hunting certainly making anything in the nature of a substantial snack inadvisable

and unhygienic; for to rush away over a course of ditches and banks for dessert is a poor aid to digestion. Personally I never was able to acquire facility in fumbling open the catch of a sandwich case and drawing out and replacing the metal container, especially with a restive horse; necessity drove me to the one and only useful invention of my life, one that caught on in both England and Ireland. This was the use of an oiled silk tobacco pouch as a sandwich bag, carrying it in the pocket of my hunting coat. It is easier to put in place, to extract, to hold, to replace; takes up less room and is more quickly cleaned than the traditional equipment of leather and nickel. Also, if you get a toss and lose your horse, or if you change horses, your lunch stays with you. We found in England a subtle, atmospheric disapproval of pipes while hunting, though cigarettes were always *au fait*. Or to get the thing just right, pipes were all right jogging to the meet or waiting there to mount and also jogging home, with or without the hounds. But from the time one mounted at the meet until faces were set homeward, a briar was conspicuous.

The Irish Country Gentleman

IF any devoted friend has followed this expedition so far, it is high time I got him out of Ireland; so accounts of many other fine foxhunts will be sternly repressed. We did not kill more than half a dozen foxes in the month, not so many as in England, the following month. The Irish foxes are somewhat stronger, I think, than the English, though, doubtless, neither is such a hardy varmint as our American red fox, which is so much less cared for and has to cover greater distances, in rougher country, to get its food. Also, in Ireland the use of terriers to bolt foxes from their earths was not so general, and we saw nothing of spade work except on one occasion when a fox known to be mangy had been marked to ground.

Repeated invitations, oral and written, from the Barrys and Nagles brought us at last to "Byblox" at Doneraile for the week-end, after hunting through the Saturday with the Duhal-

low. It was a very charming household, a typical Irish country gentleman's home.

Mr. Nagle, seventy years old, was ill in bed with influenza and at dinner we were seated with Mrs. Nagle, her three daughters and Mr. Philip Barry, while two young men of the family appeared at Sunday breakfast. The dinner was simple but deliciously cooked and served. I noticed particularly the huge and quaintly shaped cut-glass goblets for whiskey and water (which I preferred to claret). Noticing my admiration, Mrs. Nagle told me they were made 200 years ago by local Irish artisans and showed me how this old "home-made" glass could always be distinguished from the modern product—by the rough unfinished surface in the hollow underneath. A little excursion into the library showed very handsomely bound and well-selected books; I found that both Mr. Nagle and Mr. Barry knew the inside as well as the bindings of good books. The high-ceilinged wide halls were lined with glass-fronted cases containing stuffed specimens of every bird that occurred in Ireland. We inspected the stables, of course; one of the family had a horse, "Madrigal," entered in the Grand National; but when we looked for him six weeks later at Aintree,

to root for the honor of "Byblox," he was among the absent, having gone wrong in training.

Mr. Nagle had been in America—his brother, Percy Nagle, had been Sheriff of New York City—and the master of the house sent word to beg me to come up to his sick room for a talk. We had one, of several hours. He was a tall, alert, handsome man with grey Vandyke beard and the keenest of eyes; for all his threescore and ten years he was a famous sportsman, especially on a salmon river and was intensely interested in anything I could tell him of American sport and politics. He, like everyone we met in Ireland and England, of high or low degree, was full of interest in the personality of Woodrow Wilson; much more so than the average American and more intimately acquainted with Wilson's world-position at the zenith of his power, and with the causes of the tragedy that followed.

Mr. Nagle showed me with intense pride and tenderness the rich, leather-bound tribute to his son, an officer of the English army, killed in France,—a beautiful souvenir presented by the French Government having just come to "Byblox." The portraits showed a rarely gallant and handsome young Irishman. The

father kept the memorial on his bed through the weeks of his illness.

He labored hard to pin me down to a promise to bring B back to Ireland on or about April 1 for two or three weeks with them at the time when the fresh run salmon would be taking the fly on his stretch of the Blackwater. Mr. Nagle owned the Carrick Water, one of the best stretches of the stream, which means a good deal, as the Blackwater is, perhaps, the finest salmon river in the world, with a record fish of seventy-six pounds. It was the hardest thing we had to do on this tour—to refuse this invitation. For all his years, Mr. Nagle would, we were told, do his eight hours a day in the rapid stream, throwing off, his wife said, at least twenty years as soon as he began to cast with his great salmon rod. This is truly an heroic method of rejuvenation; I did eight hours myself on the banks of the River Lee with one of the mighty Irish rods, stealing a day from foxhunting, and never accumulated a more aching set of muscles in hands, arms and back.

It is very easy to write down these trivial incidents of our visit to this house and of other chance contacts with the people of South Ireland, but it is quite impossible to give a full

idea of the quality of the experience. It lay in their ready and whole-hearted hospitality, their extraordinary, ever-present, sporting spirit, their instant understanding and quick wit. For sheer charm there is no people like them.

As it happened, we saw not one of the few Irish gentry to whom we bore letters of introduction. Two of them had been driven out of the country, forever, by the late "troubles." Mr. Boyd Rochfort, of Middleton Park, Westmeath, to whom Harry Worcester Smith had given us a card of introduction, wrote and telegraphed immediately on receiving it, laying out a fascinating program for a four- or five-day stay with them, to include two days with the Westmeath hounds, for which he wished to mount us. I had heard enough of Middleton Park and the Rochforts to know that we were missing a rare opportunity of enjoying the sporting life of an Irish country gentleman's home, but we had made such engagements in both Ireland and England that we were forced reluctantly to decline. We had also on our schedule a hunt or two with the famous "Black and Tans" of Mr. John Ryan, Master of the Scarteen, and he wrote giving us full details of his best meets and urging us to come, but there, too, we failed because the month had

already gotten so full of pleasant things that two more days could not be fitted in.

John Ryan is a name to conjure with in South Ireland. At the mention of it your Irishman's face lights up and a story follows, generally concerning the speed of the "Black and Tans" or the daring of the Scarteen riders. The pack has been in the Ryan family for over 150 years. The present Master is over fifty years old; his great-great-grandfather, grandfather and father hunted these hounds in turn. Mr. Clement Ryan hunted them for forty years, until 1904.

Although well on into middle age, John J. Ryan went into the World War and as was to be expected of an Irish Ryan and Master of the Scarteen, got himself into the hottest fighting in Flanders. In an overwhelming rush of the Germans on his sector, he was about to receive a bullet from a German officer's pistol held to his head, when the German suddenly recognized him as the Master of the Scarteen, with whom he had hunted in Ireland. The trigger was not pulled and Ryan went back a prisoner to Germany, the report coming home that he had been killed.

One can imagine the wailing in the counties Limerick and Cork; Ryan's friends, who were

pretty much the entire population, erected a great cross to his memory, the site being his favorite meet for the Scarteen hounds. Then, after many months of imprisonment, John J. showed up safe and sound, as might also be expected of a Limerick Ryan; the memorial stands there yet and the Master still jogs out with his pack to this meet, recorded officially as "Ryan's Cross."

Others to whom we had letters were, like the Kildare Beresfords, driven away from their ancestral homes forever. Records of the "troubles" were everywhere to be seen. Every bridge, practically, had been blown up, often very beautiful stone structures of ancient workmanship; it was a sad thing to behold their central spans dynamited into ruins. The highway bridges our flivver crossed would be sketchily patched up with wooden construction joining the remaining stone portions and at times it was wise to get out and do a bit of inspection before we essayed to pass. One massive old castle tower in the Duhallow country had walls of such tremendous pre-mediæval thickness that it successfully defied repeated attempts to demolish it with explosives. Many demesnes of entrancing beauty were empty of tenants except for a slatternly

caretaker or two. Lord Barrymore's estate, for instance, on the estuary of the River Lee, had been seized and occupied by 200 of the Republican faction, and the owner, eighty years old, driven away to live in Paris. The extensive grounds looked trim and inviting as we hacked around them on a Sunday ride and the great residence in good order, but the demesne wall, of the ancient cunning stone workmanship, had in places been ruthlessly battered.

Every one who spoke of the "troubles" assured us they were over for good and all, that the people were heartily tired of outrages and interferences with peace and business. We noticed, however, that whenever this topic was broached the talker would be glancing covertly about to make sure that no one overheard. It did not augur well, either, for the authority and permanence of the new Free State Government that the man on the street held its young soldiers, posted about railroad stations and bank buildings, in outspoken contempt. Perhaps it is not in an Irishman's nature to think well of any soldiers, even his own, or any power whatever set to keep him from doing what he thinks fit to do.

Which brings us to the story of the officer commanding the British forces at Cork during

the troubles. He was in charge of the worst district in Ireland for violence and intrigue. Even when we were there, public buildings and walls were still disfigured with incendiary legends and exhortations. This British Colonel was the worst hated person in the country, at a time when there were very respectable hates extant. He was a marked man and was officially forbidden to leave fortified quarters on any business without a heavy escort, including motorcycle soldiers in advance and to the rear of his main bodyguard. To disregard this would have meant certain death from snipers behind the first bank he passed.

But three days a week this officer donned his pink coat, his boots and top hat and hacked, often alone, five to twelve miles to the meets of the United, hunting all day in the back country as safe from assault as if he was a babe in his mother's arms. No Irishman could be found willing to kill a man while he was out foxhunting.

We found the people straitened in circumstances after the recent period of riot and destruction, though none so poor as to be without hunters, greyhounds or other implements of their favorite sport. On a long Sunday's motor trip to Waterford we stopped to call at

the home of the H.-S.s, for generations the establishment of a hunting and racing family and full of trophies won by horses and hounds bred and trained by the owners. It was a fascinating place at the mouth of the Blackwater River, shut off in proud seclusion by a half circle of high hills. The grounds were going to seed entirely and the imposing mansion was falling to pieces, the family moving from one room to the other as each in turn fell into disrepair. Historic family portraits and other paintings of real quality hung on the walls of the spacious hall and the wide living room. A cheerful person, a sort of companion of the lady of the house, ushered us in and sparred wistfully, with the native courtesy of the Irish, to find out whether we had come to purchase some of the old family china, samples of which were set out on a table. Presently Mrs. H.-S. appeared, a well-bred, wholesome and wonderfully plucky little woman. One got the feeling that her great fight against poverty and decadence was getting the better of her; but she was a thoroughbred and put on a cordial and cheery front.

We were conducted to the stables, of course, and learned that the four or five horses in them were cared for chiefly by this courageous

lady—even the gigantic six-year-old chestnut thoroughbred, the chief pride of the establishment, which was in training for his first point-to-point race.

A glance at this animal showed that he was out of the ordinary in size, substance and quality and we asked if we might see him out of his stall. The chatelaine, for some practical reason, could not halter and lead him out, so the door of his loose box was simply opened. He came out treading on air and snuffing the higher atmospheres, into the great cobbled court that is an adjunct of every old stone-built Irish stable. With portentous snorts and lifted tail, the big chestnut high-stepped and galloped about the enclosure until he found some means of egress, through which he disappeared down a lane leading into low-lying distant fields. It looked as if we were not going to get the closer look that I wanted, but our hostess called a collie dog which had been following her around with adoring regards and bade him go after the horse. The dog sprang away with a yelp and glistening eyes; in a few minutes we heard a wild clatter of hoofs approaching and back to us up the lane came the great horse, ducking his head, bucking and kicking, with the collie rounding

him up for inspection as deftly as if he had been a timorous ewe. The lady was evidently one of those who have a way with animals. It pleased us, two months later, when we had returned to America, to get word that the chestnut had won the point-to-point race he was training for—his first effort.

A Country Race and Several Falls

THE South Irish point-to-point is a function we could not miss. A few days before we departed for England we took in the first race of the season, the Middleton point-to-point, held this year on the course at Pigeon Hill. Equipped with quantities of lunch, solid and liquid, we motored out to Pigeon Hill, accompanied by Philip Barry and one of his nieces, in time to refresh the inner man before the first race was started. I had not realized there were so many people in South Ireland as we passed on our way up the vast, treeless hill, all grassfields and banks as far as the eye could reach, from the summit of which the crowd was to observe the progress of the horses. It was the most promiscuous and democratic gathering imaginable, from the highest gentry in the land down to poachers, beggars and village idiots—the one big day of the year for thousands of country people. Motor cars, jaunting cars, ridden horses, pony carts and foot people, men and women, old and young, so

jammed the country road toward the end of the climb that we left the car to its fate and achieved the last of the journey on foot. Everyone we had met in Ireland was there and thousands besides. Incredibly gnarled, crooked, grizzled and ragged ancients, looking as little like the racing fraternity as anyone could look, were arguing with each other on the merits of the horses, each claiming to be in possession of all accumulated horse knowledge and of events past, present and future.

The course was a full four miles, once around, with heart-breaking grades, quite as long and heavy grades, I should say, as those of the Round Hill course at Greenwich, though there were no abrupt declivities or trappy places. Walking over the course, we were much disappointed in the character of the jumps. All of them, of course, were banks. They had been cleaned, between the flags, of gorse and other brush and were anything but notable tests of lepping—nothing like so formidable as the banks we encountered day after day in following hounds. Everyone complained of this, saying that it had got to be the fashion in both England and Ireland, on the insistence of people who wanted to run professional race horses. It put the Simon-pure

hunter, of course, out of the running. This took away some of the technical interest of the contest for us; but as a great test of galloping and staying across country, this course left nothing to be desired.

Country bookmakers were here, there and everywhere, soliciting custom, looking as if they were made up for the stage, in unconvincing, shabby and disreputable appearance. Stable lads and jockeys were being reverently interviewed in secluded shadows of gorsy banks in the search for some precious scrap of inside information; these worthies maintaining countenances of unutterable wisdom and reserve, suggesting that they had safely stowed away certain knowledge that would make their interviewers' fortunes if only there were money enough in the world to tempt it forth.

After the customary South Irish delay (some three-quarters of an hour), ten wild-eyed young horses in the novice race paraded, with a minimum of dignity and a maximum of sidling, bucking and breaking, through the crowd and down the hill to a low-lying field in plain view a half mile away. The procession brought salvos of exhortations, prayers and threats from the crowd to the jockeys, who wore colors that screamed and swore at each other,

breeches that presumably had once been white and boots of astonishing variety.

Another long wait came in the starting field, seized on by the ten contestants to gallop and jump their mounts over the first and second fences of the course. Vociferous joy came when a raking chestnut bucked off his rider. It had barely subsided when, the boy safely mounted again, the horses were off. But just at that moment a hare was startled from the gorse somewhere on the hill and ran through the crowd, doubling, dodging and hurdling casual objects on the grass. Immediately the hill was in pandemonium. The race was utterly forgotten in the frenzied shouts and laughter which lasted until puss had disappeared over a distant bank, followed by fifty men and boys and almost as many frantic terriers, retrievers, setters and dogs known abroad as "Heinzes"—so far has Pittsburgh cast its rays.

When attention could again be given to the race, we saw that the horses were cutting out a terrific pace. The raking chestnut which had, before the start, bucked off its jockey, was out in front running as if only six furlongs on the flat were ahead; a hundred shouted comments informed us that the chestnut would not run

at all unless it were in front. Its rider, knowing this, took all sorts of chances to keep his position and wound up about two miles on in a glorious purler over a low bank at which he had raced as fast as the horse could run.

Up the hill they came for the finish, the speed about one half what it was in the first stage of the race. The sections prepared for the jumps were simply black and solid with men and boys; they waited until the last possible moment before the racing horses charged on them to scramble off and out of the way. No attempt whatever was made to keep the course clear, probably because it would have been hopeless.

One very tired horse refused and immediately the crowd at that bank rallied, yelling, to the help of his rider, closing in behind him with poles, gorse branches and anything that would serve to "bate" the animal over.

There were five races and a good contest in each event. In the open race, the big occasion, of course, we rooted hard for little "Free Set." He lay modestly back in about the twelfth position for three miles and then gallantly came through up the heart-breaking hill, passing in the next half mile one after another of his adversaries as if they were hobbled, until his nose

reached the leader's tail. Tumultuous yells of "Free Set!", "Free Set!", "Free Set wins!" rent the air; but just as the prophecy seemed a perfectly safe one, "Free Set" faltered, virtually stopped running and came in no better than fifth.

Later, Mr. P. Sheehan took B and me aside and with a face of portentous gloom and accents suggesting at once a giant's restraint and that there would be a future reckoning, explained that "Free Set's" jockey was a nephew of the man owning the horse that won this race. Without this final touch, or something like it, it would not, of course, have been the County Cork.

There were tumbles in those races, but fewer than we expected and not nearly so many as we have seen in many point-to-points in America—a result due, no doubt, to the moderate banks and clean going.

This matter of hunting disasters we have left to the last of our Irish chapter as the least pleasant subject we have to deal with. In Irish hunting there are very many more tosses than in American hunting fields, or English, either. On one morning with the hard riding "United," I counted twelve riderless horses at one time galloping about the fields, pursued by woebe-

gone men and women splashing through the oozy turf in their hunting boots. You have, with a ditch to cross, a possibly crumbly bank to scramble on, and sometimes a second ditch beyond, many more chances of coming down than in "flying" an American rail fence or stone wall. Mr. Harry Worcester Smith claims that he had to his own credit thirty-eight tosses in his single season of hunting the Westmeath hounds.

There is, however, this very vital thing to be said: the fall your horse takes at an Irish bank is not, on the average, such a bone-breaker as the American variety. The Irishman is not going so fast in the act of jumping; it is an act of more deliberate rhythm and phases. Thus there is not, generally speaking, so much momentum and such a hard shock in hitting the Irish sod—which, too, is free from stones and is generally more yielding. In addition, a horse sprawling and missing his footing over a bank gives the rider a shorter drop to the ground than one often gets from a big-jumping American horse.

The most uncomfortable and dangerous eventuality is to have your horse come down on you, especially in a ditch and most especially in such a position as leads it to paw and

trample on you in its efforts to get up. If anyone could guarantee your getting clear of your mount, you might thrive off a course of Irish tosses. If there were not these mitigations, the hunting population of Erin would long since have become extinct.

B had only one toss in Ireland and that on the flat, when her horse skidded on slippery turf in a gallop down hill. I had four and two of them hurt. The first was like B's, one of the abominable occasions—just as hateful in Ireland as in the New World—when one's mount goes to ground in mid-gallop. Lighting on my head, a fairly stiff and sore neck ensued, leading me to fear lest my constant prayer—that I wouldn't get put out of commission until the last day of hunting—was not going to be granted. However, a good soaking in a bath-tub of very hot water enabled me to get out, after a fashion, the next day. Not to be able to look behind one in the hunting field gets on one's nerves a bit, and I inquired if there was such a thing in Cork as an osteopath. The woman clerk at the Imperial was extremely sympathetic and ready to help, and told me of a Miss Goode, an "American osteopath," she called her, who had been in Cork a year and who had accomplished, according to report,

miracles of healing. While I do not worship with the cult of osteopathy, nor of any other school of the healing art, I have a wholesome respect for expert massage in the treatment of most hunting injuries, and I set out to find Miss Goode, trusting she was really an efficient masseuse.

At her office I was confronted with an enormous, angular young man who explained that he took care of the men patients. He said he would have me "loosened up" in a jiffy. I didn't like the verb altogether and promptly received a real shock, on the way to his ministrations, when I saw the word "Chiropractic" in large letters on the wall.

It began to dawn on me that the official at the Imperial had confused osteopathy and chiropractic, but as the giant was already pushing me back on a wide board inclined at an angle of forty-five degrees I had not the character or wit to pull out of the situation then and there. No sooner had my shoulders touched the confounded board than he tilted it to a horizontal position, bringing me recumbent on my back; in a flash he, behind my head, seized that part of me in his atrociously muscular hands and proceeded, with no warning, to do to me precisely what in Virginia we were

wont to do to a young rooster when an unexpected guest was to dine with us.

Just as I made up my mind that I was really being murdered and that the only chance open to me was to make a sudden spring out of his clutches, beat him to the fire tongs at the grate and brain him with them, something in my lower neck cracked and he released me with a satisfied "That's fine; now you're all right!" After a moment I feebly wagged my head to make sure that it was still permanently associated with my body, slid off the scaffold, paid him a half crown and departed hastily and without comment. The neck was, of course, sorer and stiffer than ever, but not as much so as I feared and I reported to the clerk at the hotel that the treatment was fine. When the truth was confided to Flurry, he was for some moments overcome with delight, but moderated his transports in time to aid and abet me in encouraging Mrs. F. to go to the "osteopath" for her own rheumatism. My only sorrow was that she would not be treated by my male executioner.

A day or two after this tumble on the flat, my horse went down in a heap over a bank and lay on his side for a moment with my left leg

under him, though in such a position and on such soft ground that, so far, no injury was done. In the previous spill my horse had got away and kept me chasing him for ten minutes, to be retrieved, finally, by little Peggy Rohan, martingale demolished and bridle broken, needing another frenzied ten minutes of cobbling. (True to Ireland and the County Cork, the fox made a ring during these operations and I finally remounted just in time to take a place in the first flight of the returning hunt.) Fired with ambition, as I lay on the ground in the second fall, to avoid losing my mount again, I held on like grim death to the reins, with the result that when my horse made convulsive struggles to get up, his front was pulled around toward my right leg, and in pawing frantically for a foothold in the soft ground he found my right ankle the best purchase. At first I thought it was broken; it was not, but for months afterward the operation of getting a boot over it was conducted to the accompaniment of groans and execrations. In England I had to give up, for a time, to the extent of wearing a shoe and leggin on the right side. I found I was not hopelessly out of fashion in this rig; several steeplechase riders in the fields

of the Cattistock and Blackmore Vale also showed legs that did not pair up; Captain Colville, Assistant Master of the Cattistock, was forced to wear a leggin on the left and we made a thrifty syndicate to purchase our leggins cooperatively, he taking the left and I taking the right of each pair.

On the day of this tumble I made what was generally admitted to be a record in spills for the County Cork. Having held on to the reins and remounted my horse at the unlucky bank just described, I set off fast to catch up with the field, only to have him fall again at the very next bank, not at all a difficult one, but this time with no injuries. Two spills in two minutes for the same horse was considered worthy of note, even in Ireland. It interested me in its bearing on horse psychology because I was sure that the only reason for the second fall of that day was that the animal had become confused and ashamed, as some horses will, by the first collapse and sprawl. Horses seem to differ greatly in this regard. A few do not seem to mind falling; a larger number have a horror of it and after making a mistake exercise much care and jump big, while still others have the dislike but seem to suffer such embarrassment and loss of confidence when they go down that

they are apt to make another mistake quickly until they regain their poise.

As I wrote to M. in America, I had fairly to laugh that night at the spectacle of myself—an old coot in the mid-fifties with a sore and wry neck, four broken ribs that had worked loose, an ankle for which a hunting boot was pure agony, one eye that had gone on strike and, through sympathetic weakness in the other, often made the banks a blur; besides other and chronic infirmities—persuaded, nevertheless, that he was having the time of his life fox-hunting in Ireland. But what a precious hallucination!

Our time for leaving Ireland drew near; it was with real sadness and some misgivings that we packed our things. It did not seem logical to leave a country and people we were so fond of and sport that was so good for the chance of finding the same things in—by us—unexplored regions.

But I had presented, through the mail, Captain Higginson's letter of introduction to the Reverend E. A. Milne, Master of the Cattistock Hunt in southern England; there came in reply a charming welcome, including an invitation to be this gentleman's guests for some days until we should get our bearings; and in

any case I wanted B to sample the sport and the country and the country life on the other side of the Irish Sea.

Instead of going back to England by the Dublin-Holyhead route or the shorter sea voyage of the Rosslare-Fishguard boat, we took the steamer that plies three times a week between Cork and Fishguard, on which one spends the night in crossing the Irish Sea. This was in direct opposition to the advice of our Irish friends, who pointed out that these were, after all, only cattle steamers fitted up with some passenger cabins. But we made no mistake. The staterooms were clean and comfortable, the food better than one would have expected, the rigors of the Irish Sea came when we were fast asleep and the evening passage from Cork down the winding estuary of the River Lee to Queenstown was alone worth the travelling effort.

In the morning a fast and comfortable train took us on at Fishguard and ran through Southern Wales, the seven-mile long Severn tunnel and directly across England to London.

The Vales and Downs of Southern England

THERE had been the thought of a day or two of hunting in the Midlands before we went to the South to settle down for a month. Indeed we had successively accepted an invitation to spend some days with Captain Pearce and Major Lyon, M.F.H. of the Atherstone; arranged with the Lord Saye and Sele to fix us up with the Warwickshire and made appointments for a day with the Whaddon Chase; but as fast as these matters were concluded came news that one after another of these Hunts was closed down by the cattle disease. We were not seriously disappointed at this. A couple of days we spent in London ordering more riding breeches, revisiting the National Gallery and trying to persuade Rouch, the distinguished English photographer of horses, to come to America.

We also presented a few letters of introduction in London, having made but small impression, so far, on our bundle of them, so full had our vacation been of enjoyable things that

pressed for time. One of these letters was from Dr. Shaw to Mrs. Kellogg, at the American Embassy. Immediately on receipt of it Mrs. Kellogg sent a messenger to the Berkeley with a note asking if we would come that afternoon; B and I donned the nearest approach we could manage to formal afternoon dress and sallied forth to Crewe House. We found ourselves in the midst of a considerable function, with women coming, going and taking tea, and an odd man or two. Mrs. Kellogg, whom I had not met before, was a very gracious hostess, though, I thought, a somewhat worn one. As a fine, intelligent American woman would, she was making a success of her social duties, but I doubted that she had a taste for the continual social whirl. The much attended tea was, she told us, an everyday demand on her and there were others still more difficult; as, for instance, the arrangements for presenting aspiring American girls at Court. Here the problem was to secure the honor for one-third of those who wanted it—no more than a third could possibly be crowned with success—without making mortal enemies of the other two-thirds and their determined mothers. I blessed my stars that B would be as dismally bored at the prospect of being presented to

royalty as she was ravished at the prospect of going foxhunting. Mrs. Kellogg managed to steal away from the drawing-room full of guests to give us a peep at the arrangements of Crewe House and the noble portraits that hung on the walls of the halls and dining-room. It is a very fit and dignified abode for our ambassador to the Court of St. James.

On March 1 we took the train to Maiden Newton, the railroad station for Cattistock, in Dorset,—the far southern county extending to the sea at Weymouth and bounded on the west by Devon.

Mr. Milne's groom met us with a pony trap and our baggage was taken up in a horse wagon —the restful first notes of a change from the motor age that ushered in a month of pure delight.

The residence of the Master is at Chilfrome, scarcely more than a mile from Maiden Newton up the enchanting valley of the Frome (pronounced "Froom"), a small trout river of meadows and vales which suggested a flyrod wherever one's eye lit on it. Before the stout, cobby pony had trotted the mile we had fallen a century or two behind 1924. The narrow but excellent road wound through the vale, lofty, swelling downs of sheep pasture in the

near distance; our way turned sharply around high old stone walls hiding courtyards of cottages and outbuildings invariably built of stone, as neat as they were ancient and picturesque, the cottages thatched with straw and generally with charming leaded casement windows. We were in the very center of Dorset, of the "Wessex" of Thomas Hardy, the scene of "The Return of the Native," "Far From the Madding Crowd," "Tess," and those other romances of this quaint country and people, stories dear to me through more than thirty years.

One could not say it was more beautiful than South Ireland; its charm was of a different kind, suggesting quiet and order and rare continuity of pastoral life through many serene centuries.

The grassfields everywhere looked good to anyone having galloping in mind. The fencing was all banks, save for a hedge-and-ditch here and there, but very different from the Irish varieties; here the banks were much lower and more uniform, but nearly always covered with "growth," which normally means an unkempt hedge of wild growing thorn, alder, ash, elm, hazel and blackberry vines, anywhere from four or five to twenty feet high. In places this

growth would be cut-and-laid, or disposed on top of the bank in one orderly fashion or another.

It did not look exactly thrilling to anyone who finds jumping fences an essential part of his foxhunting joys. We quickly found, later, that brilliant riding and leaping achievements in the hunting field were not esteemed, in Dorset, an integral part of hunting, as indeed they are not. There were days when we saw the best foxhunting, in hound work, hound management and marvellous views of the entire proceedings, that we had ever enjoyed anywhere, with banks, hedges, ditches and water not at all an end in themselves, but simply obstacles that must be surmounted if, haply, there was no more quiet way to get to hounds. It fell exactly in with our mood and needs. B had already had in her young life quite as much big lepping in showring and hunting field as any youngster of eighteen ever had, and after the mad intoxication and recklessness of South Irish riding to hounds, we came gratefully and delightfully into the more orderly and reasonable sport of southern England.

Let no one imagine that this comparison questions, even relatively, the sporting spirit of England. On the contrary, we were on our

way, in this pony cart, to meet the Master of Hounds whom I deliberately judge to be, all things considered, the finest sportsman among all the foxhunting fraternity we have met or known of.

Mr. Milne's quiet home at Chilfrome, which was merely a name for two or three country houses near to each other, with half a dozen attendant cottages, was backed by an attractive, old-fashioned and utilitarian English garden and that by a long row of low stables with thatched roofs and quarters for the grooms and their families.

We arrived at about four in the afternoon; the Master had not returned from hunting and we were welcomed by Mrs. Milne, a delightfully human and hospitable lady, one of those with the rare temperament which puts guests thoroughly at ease at all times—even such an unaccustomed and self-conscious guest as myself. She was a grandmother of big boys at Eton and had the appearance, occupations and vitality of a wholesome woman of forty.

The Master of the Cattistock

WE were taking tea, with appetites strong from a month in the County Cork, in the Master's own little sitting room and den, showing a few photographs and sketches on the walls, such as snap shots of favorite hounds and of wild fox cubs at play, when Mr. Milne came in, pink-coated, velvet-capped and hungry as only a foxhunter can be at the tired end of the day.

He was a tall, spare, very straight man of more than sixty years, white hair cut close, a clean shaven and ruddy face, kindly blue eyes ever ready to light up with fun, a mouth with corners that one could not imagine turning down—one that seemed fashioned by nature to elicit cheery notes from a hunting horn. I think I have never seen another tall man sit so straight on his horse as Mr. Milne and few men of any stature. When he greeted his wife and us, his sentences turned up at the end just like the corners of his mouth, with an effect of

kindly optimism, born of healthful life in the open air; of the sweetness of dewy and frosty mornings and contented joggings home through the magic hours of dusk; of many happy days with his hounds; of a life spent in strong efforts throughout the day to give pleasure to his followers. With all this, his words and movements, every glance of his eyes, were quick, direct and decisive, as of the born Master, the leader on whom alone the fortunes of the moment and of the day depend.

Mr. Milne is a clergyman of the Church of England. A quarter of a century ago he was in charge of his parish, and at the same time a Master of Hounds, hunting two days a week. His Bishop winked at this arrangement, but grew more and more restive as Mr. Milne progressed to three days a week of hunting and then to four. Finally it came to five days in the week and the Bishop called him to account. "It has come to the point, Milne," he decreed, "where you will either have to give up hunting or give up the Church." Like a flash, Mr. Milne came back, "It will be the Church, my Lord," and so it was.

Now and then the Master of the Cattistock still officiates on the Sabbath when his ministrations are needed to fill in a gap; anyone

who has heard him will understand that he relinquished his parish, not because he was an inadequate clergyman, but because he was a superb Master of Hounds.

Later on we had come home with him on a Saturday evening after a hard week of dry weather—that day, especially, being of the sort that tires the soul and physical strength of a Master, when poor scenting leads to continual lifting of hounds and there is no let-up on a Huntsman's nerves and concentration and vitality. He and B and I were as gloriously weary as people can get to be—and were just regaining by the aid of hot tea some sparks of our vital energies—when the doorbell rang and the maid ushered in the local physician, bearing a note for Mr. Milne. It was from Lord Ilchester, some six miles away, saying that the incumbent of his Lordship's parish could not preach on the morrow and asking if Mr. Milne would not be so kind as to drive over and officiate. The weary Master made a half-comical and half-despairing gesture and was about to excuse himself, but on a thought changed his mind: "All right, I'll come," and turning to us, "They take such good care of their foxes in that parish."

He and I were, within five minutes of meet-

ing, deep in the intricacies of horseflesh, fox lore and hounds. Naturally, he was interested in what we were doing in America in the hunting field and in the comparison of our conditions and hunting countries and hounds with the English and Irish varieties. It is always a treat to talk to a man of simple, healthful life, who has for decades observed with devoted interest what was about him in the fields. I tried him on shooting, but found he did not care for it. "Fishing? Yes, it is a fine sport; just to walk along the river on a spring day; there are so many things besides catching fish to interest you. You might see a fox!"

He is one of the leading judges of hounds and hunting horses in the United Kingdom, but is rather careless as to the make-up of his own mounts. Anything that will get him to his hounds satisfies him. He does not go out to ride and jump fences, but to hunt his hounds and kill a fox. He kills foxes every month in the year except June and July, and has a total of some 5,000 to his credit. The managers of hound and horse shows can only prevail on him to help them in the two non-hunting months. From August to May, inclusive, nothing can persuade him to leave his hounds. Even the local Dorset races for hunters know him not

and our efforts to get him to join us as our guest in the pilgrimage to the Grand National were quite hopeless. "Why, it would mean practically three hunting days lost," he explained, after courteously thanking us.

We hunted with the Cattistock the next day, Saturday. There are, in Dorset, two distinct and very different types of hunting country. The "downs," hunted by the Cattistock hounds on Tuesdays and Fridays, took one to the vast, swelling hills of clean sheep pasture, with sketchy, brush-covered fencing, so far as jumping was concerned, but truly magnificent footing on mile after mile of close-cropped turf, centuries old, kept close by sheep and fertilized by their droppings—hills with a thin soil overlying great depths of chalk. These hills and their subtle charm are indescribable; Thomas Hardy came nearest making a picture of them when in one of his novels he likened them to the swelling outlines and flanks of great cattle recumbent upon this earth.

On Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays the farm lands of the Frome valley and other lower lying regions, more fertile and more regularly fenced with banks, are hunted. There is, to be sure, a third variety of country somewhat exceptional in the South of Eng-

land, resembling more the Midlands and Leicestershire type. This was represented by the "Tuesday country" of the Blackmore Vale hounds, with which B and I hunted twice a week through that month. Here was the best pasture land of the Vale and some plough, fenced with hedge-and-ditch instead of banks. One did not slow up as one approached a jump; the horse was put at it smartly, for an extended clean leap to clear the double obstacle; it is thus known as the Vale's "fly country."

Although the weather had been very dry, and the best scenting in Dorset is found when the country is soaked, with the horses splashing through puddles of water, we had a good first day on Saturday and many other good hunts through the month. Our opening effort brought us to a kill and B was lucky enough to be presented with the brush.

The rather mild jumping experiences—the chief thrills of uncertainty and danger came from putting one's head down and butting through the "growth" on top of the banks—did not bring us particular disappointment. Ireland had given enough desperate riding and fencing to hold us for quite a while and I was delighted to have B concentrate her attention on the real essentials of hunting, the work of

the hounds, their management and the factors of woodcraft in hunting the fox.

These phases of foxhunting were at their very best with the Cattistock. Mr. Milne had fifty couples of superb working hounds and fifty couples more of young entry dropping into the kennels week by week from their walking quarters. As a few of the Lanier clan, for which this record is compiled, are not deep in the technique of hounds, I will explain that hound puppies are at an early age distributed in ones and twos around the hunting country, among followers of the hunt, farmers or other suitable persons, to be brought up with human contacts and daily exercise given by their foster masters. The separation is valuable for the avoidance of distemper and other epidemic diseases, the varied diet is good and the animal's horizon of experience is enlarged during its most impressionable age as it could scarcely be when kept as only one unit among a hundred or more herded together.

Mr. Milne may have been uncertain in his church avocations on Sunday morning, but the Sunday afternoon three o'clock fixture for meeting at the kennels with his wife, a daughter and a friend or two, to look over the new entry arrived during the preceding week, to

admire the latest produce of the brood bitches and to keep up friendship and understanding with the pack of splendid working hounds—was a rite that neither weather nor any other obstacle could interrupt. Mrs. Gundry, a daughter of the Milnes, devoted to her father, to hunting and to the hounds, knew almost as much about the sport as the Master. She was a very dashing and trim-looking active woman, with a couple of fine boys at Eton. Her home was a more extensive establishment close by, formerly Mr. Milne's, but given up by him to her when her family got larger than his, reduced as his was to his wife and himself. Mrs. Gundry rarely missed a meet of the Cattistock hounds. When they were to draw the country around the kennels, she would be out of bed at sunrise of a cold winter morning, tramping over the hills to make sure that the earthstopper had faithfully done his work, getting back in time to look the picture of a well-appointed hunting woman on her sidesaddle at the meet. She adored her father, and at ticklish and puzzling junctures was no small help to him in his hunting; she knew more about the country, the ways of a fox and hound management than any other woman we saw abroad.

Mrs. Gundry asked me, after hunting through a beautiful day, if I should like to go out after sunset to see a fox that had his lares and penates directly behind her house, in a pasture next to a lower lying "withy bed," and we sallied forth in the windless frosty dusk to spy on him. We picked our way quietly along the edge of the oozy and thickety withy bed at just the hour when diurnal creatures are going to bed and nocturnal ones are faring forth—the thrilling moment of change for furry and feathered kinds. Wood pigeons clapped out of evergreen trees in alarm at our approach; a pair of pheasants going to roost in the swampy thicket began to chortle uneasily with the thought that their ogre was abroad; blackbirds and other small deer of bird kind caught the contagion of fear—the atmosphere was like nothing so much as that of a family of children listening to a too realistic ghost story at bedtime. As we crept up the steep bank of the withy bed and peered into the dusk, excited rabbits which had been holding revels in the pasture field bounced and scurried away to their burrows, imagining that the bird alarms from the thicket meant that Reynard had started his hunt. As a matter of fact we did not see him in the flesh, as Mrs. Gundry

would, at this hour, four times out of five, but we felt his presence quite as keenly and thoroughly as if the eye had caught him. The incident is described simply to suggest the familiarity of English foxhunters with their foxes. Mrs. Gundry about as intimately acquainted with the family secrets, the morals and the goings in and comings out of this fox as one would be with the life of one's house cat.

We would have forgotten to go to bed at night rather than miss one of Mr. Milne's Sunday afternoon levees at the kennels and tea with him afterward, to talk it over. His hounds were on the whole the handsomest I have ever seen of any breed. Many of them were actual or potential winners at Peterborough, the great show of hounddom—where also his drafted young entry went to be sold. The English hound at his best is a superb creature and particularly so regarded collectively, in a large pack of level, straight animals of substance and high quality. As to substance, the Master astonished us by saying that some of the dog hounds had nine inches of bone—more, of course, than ninety-nine out of a hundred thoroughbred horses. To check him up I measured a massive dog with a straw and the tape confirmed the astonishing statement.

The best English hounds are so impressive and handsome, with such grand attitudes of strength and command, that one's standards are sensibly affected after studying them for months in kennel and hunting field, as we did. Although I had been brought up with the lighter, more leggy, fox-muzzled American type—when I went, a few days after returning to America, to inspect a very fine pack, they literally looked like nothing at all in the way of foxhounds. This statement of fact does not mean at all that I do not incline to the opinion that for American conditions, our own hounds have a decided advantage over the English in their sensitive noses, agility and high initiative—or at any rate, over the average English hound that gets to America.

B is much more exact in her observation and recollection of individual horses and hounds than I ever was or will be. She was soon able to identify the units of the Cattistock pack. The entire hunting staff was amused and impressed when, wearily "hound-jogging" home in the dusk after a long, hard day, it was found by counting noses that a hound was missing from the trotting pack, but neither the Master nor his whips could determine, after repeated attempts, which hound it was that was absent,

until B put in with "It's 'Trifle' "—and "Trifle" it was.

To see Mr. Milne hunt his hounds is a liberal education in the art. He has a deft, quick way of quietly drawing his coverts that was new to us—never any lagging or slightest suggestion of indecision. His voice was a rarely melodious one, with endearing tones; he seemed to talk with his hounds and caress and encourage them instead of rating or commanding; he had a thorough understanding with them that he and they were yearning for the same thing and they willingly acknowledged his leadership in pointing out the way to get it. His horn, too, sounded sweeter than any English horn I ever heard. Indeed, whatever be the real merits of the interminable argument as to English and American hounds, I had always been sure, before hearing Mr. Milne in action, that the little metal English horn was a poor travesty, musically speaking, as compared with the haunting, deep-toned melody of some of the great curved cowhorns slung under the armpits of a Virginia or Kentucky foxhunter.

Our Dorset Hunting Box

WE spent the first five days of our English hunting as guests of the Milnes. The little visit will always remain a happy memory. In the meantime, the Master and Mrs. Gundry had been arranging for us the lease by the week of a furnished cottage, a half mile away in the village of Cattistock and only a few hundred yards from the kennels. The small cottage had been equipped with every comfort for a couple of foxhunters by Admiral Sykes, retired from the British Navy, who had been using it as a hunting box. It had bathrooms, was very compact and easily cared for, was furnished to the last detail, including linen, plate and books to read and with it came the services of a most excellent cook and housekeeper, a neat, respectable, middle-aged English woman, who assumed all the responsibilities of cleaning, ordering food and fuel, etc. We wired to Ireland for the faithful Sara, whose letters had indicated she was "tired of doing nothing." B and I simply walked in and began to live in

the lap of luxury and perfect quiet. This gem of a hunting home cost us each week, including stables, about as much as one thriftily managed day at a big New York hotel.

Cattistock is a typical Dorset hamlet of perhaps two hundred people, nestling down in the vale below the slopes of high downs—simply a couple of hundred yards of the lovely, narrow country road walled in by stone cottages, each in physical contact with its neighbor and with its garden behind. The inhabitants were the village folk of Hardy's novels, the thatched or slate-roofed cottages indescribably quaint and picturesque. Directly in front of our windows was what Baedeker would call a "good" church, distinguished by a *carillon* of thirty-six bells, brought from France a hundred years or so ago, and an enormous clock taking up almost the entire breadth of one face of the square tower. These bells chimed each quarter and more elaborately at the hour, while at six in the evening they gave something of a recital. On Sabbath occasions they made serene and haunting melody for a half hour or more at a time. Heard at sunset in that quaint and pastoral setting; with the village close by hundreds of years removed in atmosphere from any touch of modern ugliness; with the quiet

mystery of the lonely downs brooding above—this bit of French art and grace transposed to Dorset was so engaging that we would run, at the sound of the *carillon,* to open a window to hear the better, when we were at home; or stop our horses (subconsciously in the mood of Millet's "Angelus") when we were on our slow way homeward from hunting.

Just across from our cottage on the only street of Cattistock were the stables that went with our leased possessions. In them we kept four hunters hired from the firm of Young and Hellyer, whose main establishment was nine miles away at Sherborne. These people had a more thoroughly organized business of hunter-hiring than any I had ever heard of and they made a visitor's horse problem no problem at all. In their establishment were no less than a hundred hirelings. They were willing to send them anywhere up to several hours of railway journey, even for a single day's hunting. The charge was three guineas per day.

In our own case, having a stable but no horses, they sent over four to stay with us at their expense for keep and to be used as we saw fit, with no charge except when we hunted. With the animals and their tack came a bright young English groom who cared for them (at

the firm's expense) and who was invaluable to us in valeting us as to boots, breeches and hunting coats—and in doing any odd errands for which a man and a bicycle were required.

These four horses in our stables were changed from time to time as we desired, no questions being asked as to our reasons; if one got a sore back or was hurt in the hunting field or if we simply thought we should like to change him, back he went to Sherborne to be replaced by a fresh mount. We had absolutely nothing to do except to pay three guineas when we took one out for a day's hunting. For hirelings, they were very good indeed. We motored to Sherborne on our first Sunday in Dorset to look over the lot and found Captain Marshall in charge—brother of the Captain Marshall who had been our Whip at Greenwich for several years.

There was nothing he would not do to please us; perhaps through this chance contact we fared better than the average patron; it is certain we were comfortably, safely and at times excellently mounted. When Captain Marshall had observed B's riding a bit he began to send for her use to the meets of the Blackmore Vale (with which we did not hunt our four home horses) something extra in the way

of thoroughbreds—point-to-point aspirants in training; one big, bob-tailed chestnut B rode was really a finished and confidential hunter of all around capabilities seldom seen among hirelings.

She got one toss during the month in England when she dropped her hands for her horse to take off at a "gap" filled up by a moderate gate. The poor brute was one of those which had been ridden so continuously the wrong way, with its riders taking an extra hold of its mouth at fences, that he took this freeing of his head as a signal that jumping was not contemplated —got under the gate, and there was a wreck, but nobody hurt. I also had one spill with the Blackmore Vale riding a sensitive horse inclined to rush his banks a bit, probably because he had been getting his mouth jerked at them. He took one too rapidly, got his feet mixed up in the cut-and-laid branches of the growth on top and came down—also without injuries.

With the Cattistock neither of us had any mishap and we saw scarcely any tosses throughout the month. I should say that riding with Mr. Milne was the safest I have ever seen in real hunting, where hounds ran fast, numerous foxes were being found and the field keeping well with the pack.

This immunity was due largely to the fact that the Cattistock people went out with the hounds to hunt foxes rather than ride and jump fences; they were aided, too, by continual use of the wagon gates which are normally found in every farm field in their country. These gates were from three feet six inches to four feet high and would be considered in America just about right to make a satisfactory jump. In Dorset they were not jumped but opened—when the growth on the banks was so homogeneously thick that one's best efforts could not find a "weak" place to butt through as the horse sprang on the bank from which the hedge grew. These farm gates had upright spring latches; everybody carried a fairly long-handled, stout crop with a right-angled handle; old hands at the game, even frail-looking ladies of sixty-five or seventy years, were marvellously expert at galloping up to a gate, hooking their crop around the latch and with one dexterous motion undoing it and shoving or drawing the gate open for passage. Etiquette provided that each rider, in passing through, should hold the gate long enough and open enough for the next rider to get a purchase with his crop. There was a distinct trick in handling one's whip on the latches. I never

found just what this trick was, but promptly found I did not have it and soon lost shame sufficiently to give place to anyone, even a nice old grandmother, who would blaze the way.

There were exceptionally pleasant people in the field with the Cattistock hounds. Captain Digby, the greybearded Secretary of the Hunt, was a fine figure of an elderly English country gentleman. He was indefatigable, too, in hunting the fox and an excellent man to follow if one wished to get to the right place at the right time with a minimum of discomfort to one's horse and one's self. His wife, Lady Lillian, was a regular rider to hounds and a very intelligent and interesting woman. Her thorough understanding of Thomas Hardy and her love for his stories and the scenes in which they were laid, her quiet enthusiasm for the picturesque beauties of the down country and her interest in the bird life of Dorset made her a most companionable and helpful gossip while a covert was being drawn or an outlaw fox slowly and laboriously dug out of his earth. Major Fagan, an elderly retired officer and his bright and hospitable little wife, who reminded one of Emma Grand, were excellent and genial company; we foregathered largely on Ireland, the Major's birthplace and prohibition in

America, the latter a topic of never-failing—if somewhat horrified—interest and curiosity for every Englishman or Irishman. General Vaughn, retired, was also amusing, with a fund of stories. He spent the hunting season with his home at the little inn at Maiden Newton. Lady Ilchester was generally in the field, either with the Blackmore Vale or Cattistock. Her tall, handsome daughter, Lady Mary Fox Strangeways, was engaged to a young M.F.H. from a more northern county who visited her family and hunted with us. He was six feet two or thereabouts, with the figure of one of Ouida's guardsman heroes. He was very perfectly appointed in pink and Master's cap; with Lady Mary on a great white hunter and both extremely well mounted the couple made an impressive picture in the hunting field. Always present, in black coats, white breeches and top-hats, were two or three to half a dozen young naval officers from the fleet at Portland—tall, slender boys of nineteen to twenty-five years and fine specimens of the quiet, well-bred young Englishman brought up to be modest, brave and, whatever befalls, to "play the game." One can say things about snobbishness and this or that in criticism of the system which produces these young fellows, their charm and

their limitations, but it remains true that it is a rarely attractive type. One of their ideas of playing the game in the hunting field seemed to be to ride at desperate looking places in the banks with very little or no provocation, in spite of the fact that some of them must have been much better sailors than horsemen. B who, of course, was soon on terms with this element of the field, shook her head when it came to following their lead over the worst looking jumping places in sight. A tremendous event in the local Hunt race meet was the "Sailors' Steeplechase," in which some twenty-five of these young fellows rode hirelings, utterly strange horses to them, apportioned by lot.

Another hunting type was seen in Squire Sheridan, a tall, quite stout man of seventy-nine years, who came out very regularly on his confidential grey mare, was the most boisterously enthusiastic member of the field and never wanted to stop chasing a fox or looking for one to chase. He must have weighed 250 pounds and was of the ponderous, short-necked, red-faced breed of men who generally have to give up active exercise at forty and die early. Here he was on the brink of fourscore, going strong over fields and banks—and that after a life which had been, according to all reports,

including his own, full enough of lively incident to wear out a half dozen men.

I was somewhat mystified on the first of the Tuesday and Friday down hunting days of the Cattistock to see a number of stalwart men in dark coats, wearing the velvet caps consecrated to the use of Masters of Hounds. I engaged one in conversation to find out that he had a remarkable knowledge of the countryside and of agricultural facts, but I could not within the bounds of politeness frame any inquiry that brought out an explanation of his dress. Mr. Milne satisfied my curiosity as we rode home that evening among his hounds. They were representative farmers of the country. The Dorset farmer does not own land, but is often a very substantial Englishman, the one I talked to working no less than a thousand acres of rented farms. This acreage is much more considerable in a countryside where there is practically no waste or forest land than it would be in America. Mr. Milne had many years ago instituted the practise of allowing forty-three of the most prominent farmers of his hunting country to wear the Master's cap. The number was never more and never less, the privilege descending from father to son or to the next male kin. The little arrangement

evidently worked to perfection, from the standpoint of all concerned. It would have been unthinkable for one of these farmers to have come out hunting in pink; but they had their distinction and it was their Hunt. It was a pleasant sight to see them on their big, useful-looking horses, having such a good time and fitting in with the gentry so easily and naturally on the common meeting ground of sport.

Miss Kimball, a good-looking, well-groomed young woman of twenty-eight, and her neighbor Miss Lupton could be counted on to appear with the Cattistock hounds. They made attractive examples of the young unmarried women of dignity and refinement who hunted "on their own." Miss Kimball generally rode horses she herself had schooled. She was much interested in farming, read the latest news of scientific agricultural progress and addressed meetings of country folk on such matters of public welfare. This illustrates a characteristic difference between English young people, especially young girls, and American youth. Your English miss of eighteen to thirty will often display an interest in politics and other public affairs and an understanding of them that would be difficult to match on our side of the Atlantic.

The Englishman at Covert Side

IT was the women, too, of our casual acquaintances made among these Dorset County folks who had the closer contact with literature; they were also, as a rule, much more intimate than the men with nature, outside of specifically sporting phenomena. I was anxious to visit the Egdon Heath of Hardy's "Return of the Native"—to my mind one of the great English romances. Although we were, as has been noted, in the very center of Hardy's Wessex, my first few inquiries as to the whereabouts of "Egdon" were barren of results. Finally, Lady Digby, who had shown herself in covert-side conversations thoroughly read in the Wessex romances, explained to me that Hardy's "Egdon," pictured with such epic genius in the story of *Eustacia* and *Wildeve,* was really a composite thing, formed in the novelist's imagination for this fiction from the characteristics of several different barren, heathy tracts. She also directed me to the one component which came nearest to being the

vast, lonely, furze-covered waste of the novel, that upland desert which had looked, unchanged, on the Middle Ages, Norman conquerors, Saxon kings, Roman road builders, ancient Britons and Phœnician explorers. B and I made, under Lady Digby's coaching, a pilgrimage to "The Great Heath" of the maps, just east of Dorchester and found no disappointment in the grip of its immensity, its loneliness, its grim but noble isolation and severe dignity. The stretch of unfenced furze as far as the eye could reach was more hilly and varied of contour than I had anticipated; its treelessness was accentuated by one solitary storm-stunted pine a mile away. Just as no country can really be said to be lonely unless there is someone there to sense its desolation, so one would not have been so much impressed with Egdon's treelessness unless the eye had found this single, squat dwarf of a pine.

The same guide pointed out to us, on the way to a meet, *Wildeve's* home, "The Quiet Woman Inn." Just as Hardy described it, the conspicuous painted sign showed a female, nearly life-sized, decapitated and holding her head under her arm.

A propos of Dorset humor: I was remarking one day to B that we had as yet seen no

examples of the fabled Briton who listens to a facetious effort with no sign of understanding, only to break out into a guffaw five minutes afterward; our way had brought us among people with whom one had to be quick enough on one's mental feet. Not an hour after, in a longish wait at a covert side, I was chatting idly with a portly and perfectly appointed English gentleman, with whom I had just picked up a chatting acquaintance, about the best way to see the Grand National, he kindly giving me the benefit of his own experience.

I told him I had written to the invaluable hall porter of the Berkeley Hotel asking him to see that seats were reserved at Aintree and that he had replied, after telephoning across the breadth of England, that seats could not be reserved at all in the stand we had set our hearts on. I remarked on this hall porter's helpfulness and added that in answering his letter I had been uncertain whether or not to use the prefix "Mr." in addressing the envelope. No fox appearing from the covert, I went on idly, simply making conversation: "Hostettler is so much the most splendid-looking man I have seen on either side of the Atlantic that I considered putting on the envelope 'His Grace.' "

After solemn and silent contemplation of this feeble sally, the gentleman edged his horse closer to mine, leaned over towards me in a kindly effort to make sure we were not overheard and said in a half apologetic and half horrified voice, "My *dear* Sir, that would *never* do; 'Your Grace' is used only with *Dukes* and there are only *nine* of them in all England."

There was nothing to do except to register thanks for the correction, and to hope that he will not for the rest of his life tell his anecdote of an anonymous American just as I am telling mine of an anonymous Englishman. A few weeks later I tried the story on Augustin Birrell, at lunch in Mr. Asquith's London house, but without any great *éclat*. Birrell, who had been keeping the party laughing during lunch at his satirical picture of the methods of a certain great editorial enterprise, merely grunted at the conclusion of my poor little effort and asked: "Well, who the hell would go to a fox covert to find a sense of humor?"

A Hunt has its strongly marked individuality, even more certainly in its field of riders than in its physical characteristics of country, hounds and foxes. The differences are sometimes not easy to analyze, even when most surely felt. Of a nearby Hunt, where four

or five times as many riders turned out at the meets as one saw with the Cattistock, a charming lady of the latter organization said: "I loathe them collectively and adore them individually." We had hunted with them and at once caught the truth of her epigram. The distinguishing spirit of the Cattistock was friendliness, well-bred ease and cheerful informality. Doubtless the Master's personality makes, as a rule, these subtle distinctions felt throughout the organization and its followers. Certainly one could trace the cheery and unstilted manners and methods of the Cattistock to Mr. Milne's presence. Formality and he were utter strangers except just in so far as it might have some real use in life and that was not very far. For instance, at other English Hunts we visited the terriers were carried in cute leather bags slung to neatly liveried hunt servants. With the Cattistock a couple of ecstatic terriers scampered along with the hounds, to be given a lift, if needed, on the way home after a large and exacting day, by one of the Whips. When we ran a fox to earth with the knowledge that it was a criminal convicted of lamb-killing propensities which demanded extermination, there was no shiny patent digging apparatus designed for fox evic-

tion and carried by a special Hunt servant or second horseman; one of the Whips galloped to the nearest farmhouse for spades of the common garden variety. There was always, on such occasions, a husky countryman or two riding in the field to lend a hand at digging, but neither he nor the Whips nor any ambitious member of the Hunt who proffered his services did half as much excavating work as the tall, slender, greyhaired Master himself. One sunset, after a gruelling day, we dug at an earth for more than an hour, going twelve or fourteen feet, only to find that the beast was still at least that much farther away and must be granted one more lease of his ill-spent life. Perhaps if one had ewes that were lambing, one would have felt bloodthirsty, but not even a recital of this marauder's crimes or one's sympathy for the sweating and toiling Master prevented a secret relief when the sappers and miners were defeated.

The attitude of the Englishman toward strangers in the hunting field is, as far as our experience went, very different from the American idea of it. The Englishman is not, of course, so quick and easy as your Irishman with a warm welcome; but, on the other hand, we saw nothing of the legendary stand-offish-

ness and damn-your-eyes manner in the hunting field. No doubt the American is apt to think that an Englishman is cold and forbidding when he is only decently reserved. It is also true that we sometimes mistake an Englishman's mere diffidence for offensive unwillingness to have anything to do with us. Certainly, to us two Yankee strays the English folk we came in contact with were, if a bit deliberate in coming forward, sure to be in their quiet way, friendly, courteous and helpful. In fact one has to admit that English manners are at many points very much better than ours. As compared with the helpful, efficient and polite London cabby, our New York taxi driver is nothing more nor less than a yeggman. While our railroad conductors and brakemen are at bottom men and brothers, they are a very rough product so far as manner and service are concerned compared with the English guards. Just to be present at the salutations between Mr. Milne and the country folks he might meet, jogging out with his hounds or making his tired and hungry way home, made the beginning or the end of the day a better thing.

Dorset from a Hunting Saddle

THESE morning progresses to meets, up and over the high pastures of the downs or between the hedges of delightful narrow country roads and lanes gave one interesting, if sketchy, opportunities to observe the bird and animal life of the Dorset countryside. Rabbits were everywhere in unbelievable numbers. Traversing the downs toward dusk, one could frequently see a dozen at one time, playing about over the close-cropped grass in the intoxication of that witching hour. The one slight danger in the almost perfect galloping was the chance of finding one's horse in the midst of a colony of rabbit warrens. Every few minutes one or more rabbits would hop across the road into the growth on the banks when one was motoring in the evening. The English rabbit is in appearance extremely like our own "cottontail," and looked about the same size to me, although ours is not a rabbit at all, but a hare—the distinction being that rabbits burrow into the ground and hares do

not. There were shipped out of Dorset to the markets 800,000 rabbits in one month. A gentleman told me he had been out ferreting with his small boys the day before, but had "only" got forty rabbits. I asked if they did not damage the crops seriously and was told that they were themselves worth more as food and as a cash crop than anything they could destroy. They furnished the stock food for the foxes; certainly it was a poor provider of a fox that ever had to miss a meal of fresh meat with these thousands of rabbits around his home.

The badger was new to us. He is seldom viewed by man, being a nocturnal prowler, but once in England and once in Ireland our hounds found a badger away from his earth and had a battle royal on their hands. With many of the habits of our woodchuck, the badger is very much more, indeed, of a caveman. I was told an old boar sometimes weighs forty pounds. He is so tough of hide and fur as to be literally indestructible, even when assailed by a pack of infuriated great English hounds, except by way of one place in his anatomy. He wears this Achilles' heel at his throat and the fiercest hound must reach that small spot to do anything decisive with him. Badgers have

very complicated and extensive underground dwellings which they, unlike the fox, keep scrupulously clean. Sometimes a fox lives with them in amity, the badger doing the housecleaning for both.

Deer were not infrequently started by the foxhounds into leaping flight. They were chiefly roebucks, a small variety distinguished by an astonishingly large patch of pure white at the flag. We also saw a red deer or two. In Dorset these graceful animals were either tame denizens of large parks or half wild individuals which had escaped from them; but in the adjoining county of Devon there are fair numbers of genuinely wild red deer and stags—particularly on the high wastelands of Exmoor, in the country of the Doon Valley and the inimitable "Lorna." Here they are regularly hunted in their wild state by the Devon and Somerset staghounds. The Cattistock and Blackmore Vale packs paid no attention whatever to the deer we found, even when they bounded away directly in front of the hounds and never made a mistake on a deer's drag in spite of the fact that its scent is much stronger than that of a fox and irresistible to our American hounds if they have once hunted it.

The birds one saw most frequently in the

March fields and hedges were rooks, wood-pigeons, blackbirds, chaffinches, thrushes, robins, skylarks, plover, partridges and pheasants—with two or three varieties of sparrows. I saw one hawk and one owl in a month of hunting; in Virginia or Connecticut there would have been hundreds. The one hawk noted I took to be their sparrowhawk—a larger bird than ours of the same name and very much fiercer. I was riding quietly along one bank of two parallel ones, with "growth" from the top of each making a long narrow jungle of saplings, bushes, briars and vines. Came the alarm note of some small bird and then the scuffling of the hawk in this thicket as he turned and twisted and fought his way through the maze of branches and briars with incredible speed—putting to shame our own "blue darter" which pursues birds with such fearlessness through brushy places looking quite impenetrable to a hawk's flight.

The English blackbird has no likeness to our own except blackness. He is a songbird of the hedges, sporting a yellow bill. He makes short excursions from and hurried retreats to the brush. He is seen singly or in pairs, instead of large flocks as with us. As a songbird he is delightful, while his alarm note is

so like that of our robin that I would start in my saddle at the sound of it. The English robin is, of course, a diminutive creature beside ours, a neighborly little creature of brush, hedge and orchard, with a soft song of much greater variety and attractiveness than that of our redbreast. The plover lay their eggs on the downs with no prepared nest to speak of. The eggs are esteemed a great delicacy and are gathered in numbers, all of them, so far as Dorset is concerned, in three or four fixed days of April, to make sure that they are fresh. The very first eggs found are always sent to the King.

We had never before this expedition seen a skylark. In March we found thousands—always over the wide grassfields or downs, in places such as those chosen by our bobolinks. Over and over again I stopped my horse to gaze aloft until my eye caught the hovering, ecstatic singer. Sometimes one could identify a dozen at one time in the blue above some wide grassfield, with still others singing so high that the eye could not catch them.

Not Shelley nor any of the long line of those who have sung the skylark's praises prepares one fully for the charm of his aërial rhapsody. If Shelley failed, I am not going to try; but

there was one to me very curious aspect of the lark's mounting flight and song which will be noted here because I suspect it has not been done before. It is the amazing reminder, in certain repeated notes of his persistent aria and especially in those near the zenith of his flight, of the mating song of the American woodcock. The latter is heard by few people and is identified for what it is by still fewer. It occurs, of course, only in the mating season and, probably only a few times in the bird's year, exclusively on the occasion of the most perfect cool and quiet dusks and dawns of the love-making period. When night or morning is approaching the male bird begins on the ground with deliberate, snipe-like calls, separated by intervals of several seconds. Presently these cease and only the characteristic twittering of its wings is heard as, having left the ground, it climbs through the twilight in zig-zags toward heaven. Reaching a height of perhaps two hundred feet, it immediately begins a spiral toward the earth and at that moment breaks out into a brief love song of haunting timbre and melody—so utterly unlike anything one would expect of a long-billed, wooden-headed snipe species that one all but refuses the evidence of one's eyes and ears.

Now here in England, in the skylark's climax of emotion, in *his* nearest possible climb to the empyrean, in a land three thousand miles away and in a bird unlike the woodcock in almost all the ways one bird can differ from another—come these nearly identical notes of supernal sweetness.

Partridges and pheasants we saw constantly. The former looked and moved very like American bobwhites, doubled in size, but they had nothing of our "quail's" disposition to squat and trust to its protective coloration, for the excellent reason that their larger size and the cleanness of the country in March would have made bobwhite's secretive manœuvres entirely futile. They had already mated in March and invariably appeared in pairs.

The down hunting with the Cattistock constantly brought enchanting views. In some sections showed the extensive Blackmore Vale, with hundreds of neat grassy farms stretching away below one nearly as far as the eye could reach from the ramparts of the downs, hills so steep that sometimes one had to get off one's horse and lead up them. In other parts, to the southward, the ocean would appear in the distance, with a delicious freshening of the air in the breezes coming from it.

Everywhere on the high downs were reminders of the Roman occupation of the country and, too, of pre-Roman Britons. We frequently rode over military earthworks on the edge of the downs overlooking Blackmore Vale. The Roman invaders kept to the high hills, on which their intrenchments are everywhere to be seen. They never conquered the Britons in the larger of the low-lying vales, such as Blackmore. That terrain was, nearly 2,000 years ago, a land of all but impenetrable forests and morasses from which the native Britons successfully defied Cæsar's and Hadrian's hosts. It was no unknown matter in our hunting to come suddenly in the course of a fast gallop upon a trench thirty feet deep and half a mile long. An isolated hill of the downs near Dorchester is one vast Roman fort, with successive lines of intrenchments, the fortifications occupying about 120 acres. It was always possible to distinguish at a glance the Roman from the British earthworks, the former being of rectilinear design and the latter circular in form. To me one of the most curious of the relics of the Roman occupation were the small drinking places for cattle, sometimes seen in the wide pastures of the downs, which are otherwise very waterless regions.

These were shallow excavations, of generally rectangular shape, something like twenty to thirty feet on each side and holding water even in the dry season we hunted through. The Dorset people do not know how to make these pools, no one having learned the secret of the Roman construction to ensure a continuous supply of water in them.

These matters of curious and historic interest which enriched the days of our sport on the downs were, naturally, secondary to the entirely distinctive character of the foxhunting on these hills. Its most novel and satisfying quality lay in the full, open views one got of the hunting operations and the hounds. The size and the shape of the hills were such that, helped by a total absence of trees and of other growth on the pasture fields, except a rare patch of gorse —one could in one day see more of the actual details of pursuing a fox than one might get in Virginia or Maryland in several seasons. There were occasions when we found ourselves galloping over the close-cropped turf along the contour lines of the flank of an immense down with the hounds in full cry running parallel with us on the flank of the opposite hill, and the fox ahead of them—all in plain view for a matter of miles. To reach the pack would

have required going down and up hillsides so steep as to cost too much horse energy. In this matter of clear, intimate and exhilarating views of the chase, there was nothing in our experience anywhere that could compare with Mr. Milne's hunting in Dorset.

On to the Grand National

IN this enchanting country and fine sport the weeks passed with startling swiftness. We were, before we realized it, coming to the day when we must close our hunting and make for the Grand National Steeplechase, an inviolate fixture in our program. A few days before we left Dorset Everett Crawford wired that he would come with Evna and Molly for a brief visit, and have a hunt with us. B was in transports over seeing her chum Molly and introducing her to the sport we were having and I was not far behind in enthusiasm over the opportunity to gossip with Everett, who was on the home stretch of a tour around the world with his entire family. Horses were procured for the visitors and we had a fair day with the Blackmore Vale.

It turned out that Everett and his clan were going to Liverpool a day or two before the date of the Grand National and the bright thought came to me that this might be used to solve our problem of assuring seats for the

famous race without losing an extra day of hunting. After exhaustive study of the very complicated matter of viewing the Grand National, comparing the opinions of a score of experienced advisers in England and Ireland, we had determined to go to the small "Canal Turn Stand" at Aintree. Here one could see perfectly the spectacular jumps at Becher's Brook and Valentine's Brook—the stand being directly alongside the latter obstacle, which is taken by the horses just after the sharp right-angled turn—and three or four other jumps very fairly; one would be, as regards a small but all-important segment of the race, very much in the picture, as against going to the big County Stand in an ambitious plan to see the whole race, only, perhaps, to see nothing much at all on a hazy day.

There are several militant schools of thought in this business of viewing the Grand National; a majority opinion is that it really takes three years to see it, one year for each of three different viewpoints.

But as to the Canal Turn Stand, on which B and I had decided because we wanted to be at close quarters to the contestants in a segment that brings out their mightiest efforts so that we might study, in detail, the riding and

the jumping—there was no such thing as reserving seats. Furthermore, the fact that in 1923 the Prince of Wales and the Duke of York had elected to go to the Canal Turn and the further fact that the King was going there in 1924, made the location so popular that we concluded something clever must be done if we were not to spend many hours waiting in the seats we wanted to occupy. So it was arranged with Everett Crawford, who was going out to Aintree early Friday morning, the day of the race, to hire a couple of boys to seize and hold seats for B and me to take over when we came up from London on one of the special race trains, arriving at Aintree about noon. This is carefully explained here because it has to do with the rather remarkable experience we had at Aintree later on.

The Wednesday before the Grand National was our last day of hunting abroad. We jogged home with Mr. Milne in the dusk (after a day that made us wonder how we could ever have made engagements to do anything but hunt with him until we had to rush for our ship) and hastily packed up for an early train to London on Thursday.

We stopped at Chilfrome on our way to the station to say a last good-bye to Mrs. Milne

and to pick up the Master, who was utilizing the non-hunting Thursday to go on some journey of hound business.

At the Maiden Newton station we were engrossed in talking to him and for the quarter of an hour he spent with us on the train. When he left us I began casually to take stock of our belongings on the racks and floor; to my horror I found that the leather brief case in which I carried my passport, steamship tickets, letters of introduction and other objects too precious to trust to suitcases, was not with us. I thought I had not mislaid it at our cottage or Mr. Milne's and if this were the case, it must have been left somewhere in the Maiden Newton railroad station. As we were going to be at Aintree all day Friday and were due to start with Sir Henry Lunn very early Saturday morning to the Continent, to motor through the Belgian battlefields, the passports were absolutely and immediately essential; the miserable case contained other things even more irreplaceable.

I dropped the window of our compartment at the next stop, hailed a small boy selling "sweetmeats" and asked him to get off to the agent at Maiden Newton a telegram explaining the importance of the matter and directing

him to send the case, if found, to the Berkeley, in London, and in any event to wire at once to that address whether it was found.

When we arrived at the Berkeley there was the reply informing me that the case was found and that it was following by the next passenger train. An hour and a half later the precious parcel was delivered in my room at the Berkeley. My estimation of the English telegraph, parcel post and railroad systems took a great leap forward.

The one afternoon we had in London before making the morning race train was, very unexpectedly, a memorable one. I had, more or less perfunctorily, let Sir Henry Lunn know that on the list of institutions I had made for B to visit were the House of Lords and the House of Commons. With his invariable energy and kindness he had taken over the arrangement of these two matters. The House of Lords was easy; Sir Henry's close friend, the Lord Saye and Sele, invited us to come as his guests and to take tea with him there. But B's proposed invasion of the House of Commons threatened to shake the British Empire to its very foundations; the woman's gallery was small, the privilege was accorded in order and a longer notice was required. Even Mr.

Asquith's influence failed to put it over. Fearing international complications and suspecting that B would in any case go through the experience as a somewhat dull duty, I attempted to explain that it was a matter of no consequence; but Sir Henry is an undefeated sort of person and insisted on going on; the privilege was finally secured through the offices of one of the members of the Labor Government.

So, after hearing an elderly peer discourse in the House of Lords on the future of British agriculture and then taking tea with Sir Henry, the Lord Saye and Sele and Sir Martin Conway in the restaurant, we were piloted into the Commons, B going behind the grating at one end and I having a good seat at the other end of the relatively small Chamber.

There was an astonishingly full attendance of members and just as we entered Mr. Asquith was speaking in a sharp and extended interrogation of the Labor Government on its policy as to France, the Ruhr and Reparations. This brought Ramsay MacDonald to his feet for an able and rounded exposition of the program of his party. His handsome and rather aristocratic person, his earnestness and ease as a speaker as well as the notable matter of his discourse, made every sentence tell with us, so

different was he and his rhetoric from what an American was prepared to expect from a "laborite."

He sat down; I was congratulating myself on our curious good luck in happening, by pure accident, to run in at this particular juncture when Mr. Lloyd George arose and launched into one of his most brilliant heckling and satirical onslaughts on MacDonald, his Government and their policy—or lack of policy—in these three great international questions. The speaker had fierce passages of arms with various labor members, frequently being unable to proceed for jeers, and once, at repeated demands that he "withdraw," squaring his shoulders, shaking himself defiantly and roaring, "I will *not* withdraw." The agility and cleverness of the little Welshman in debate could not have been seen to better advantage; his duels, particularly with one dour, logical and slow-thinking Scotchman in the labor benches, bringing out inextinguishable laughter, even from the Scot's own partisans.

So, as luck had it, B's two hours of British politics were anything but perfunctory or dull.

The Great Race and—Home

EIGHT o'clock the next morning found us on one of eight long special trains that left London to traverse the breadth of England to the Aintree course and the one outstanding race of the sporting year. Besides these London trains, other specials came to Liverpool from every part of Britain carrying crowds of racegoers. Our train only stopped once in the one hundred and eighty miles and made it in about four hours. In general, the best English trains make much better time than the American and are very much more punctual. Between Reading and London, one train we used ran eighty miles an hour for a time. This long racing special had every seat reserved or occupied. We found our seats, which had been duly secured by the invaluable hall porter of the Berkeley while we were still in Dorset, equipped with a breakfast table all set, and just before we reached the course luncheon was served. The train stopped over for us, as did

scores of others for their passengers, and we boarded it again after the racing to take the same seats and have dinner where we sat on our way back to London. Nothing could have been more comfortable or better managed. When one considers that no less than 250,000 people went to Aintree for this day, a great part of them from the opposite shores of England, the efficiency, punctuality and agreeable manner with which the crowd was handled were beyond praise.

We passed through Liverpool about noon and pulled up beside the Aintree course a quarter of an hour later. Crowds were streaming to the track and greater crowds were already walking over the course, surrounding the mile or more of bookies' stands and massing in the grandstand, which loomed up dimly in the haze.

The Grand National considered as a spectacle has an individuality all its own just as in racing technique it is different from all other steeplechases. It is a grim occasion. Some atmosphere of the inferno surrounds it—physically and spiritually. A gloomy, portentous haze half veils the structures and the sweep of the vast, level and low-lying field. The crowd is a monstrous thing, not at all a drunken rabble or a noisy one—it is extended

over too great an area to have any cohesion or proper center of vocal expression—but a repressed, fatalistic assemblage, keyed to expectations of disaster. The thirty-odd boldest thoroughbreds in the world and as many of the most intrepid riders are about to risk their lives on the brutal and exacting course to crown a champion for the new racing year. The distances are so great that the crowd actually seems subdued. The color tone of all objects is dark, forbidding and uncertain.

B and I walked over the course from a point near the grand stand to one past the Canal Turn, examining a dozen or more of the famous jumps, including Becher's Brook and Valentine's Brook. As one walked on the turf track toward these obstacles, they did not give the impression of being so formidable as they have been pictured in prose and poetry. This illusion was created by the unusual length and mathematical neatness of the barriers. It was not until one actually stood in contact with a fence, measuring its height by one's own stature and noting at close quarters its thickness and stiffness, that one realized what a superequine task it was to take the obstacle at racing speed in the mêlée of thirty wildly excited horses. To anyone asking whether the

Aintree fences are really the heroic obstacles they are reputed to be, the answer is: go to the landing side of Becher's Brook, look up to the top of the wide hedge, so stiff that a man can walk on its top surface—a horse, either, for that matter—and down at the treacherous slant of the ground falling away to the ditch. If that glimpse does not convince, there is nothing for the skeptic except to ride in the race.

B and I tramped hurriedly through this inspection tour with our faces toward the Canal Turn, where we expected to find Crawford and the minions who were to hold seats for us. The second jump after Becher's Brook brought the racing horses facing the Canal and close to it, making it necessary that they should immediately, on dashing over this obstacle, turn abruptly to the left, pass directly in front of our stand and dare Valentine's Brook.

The stand was a small one and the first glimpse showed us that it was jammed so full of humanity that not another soul could get in. As we walked slowly up and down in front of it, looking for our party, people in it were writhing to get freedom for their hands and arms to handle thermos bottles and sandwiches.

Not a sign of the Crawfords could we find or of anyone holding seats for us. It subsequently

developed that when our friends arrived here much earlier in the day every seat was already occupied and they were forced to hurry to the grand stand to save their own situation.

When a third and fourth inspection assured us that our plan had come to grief, I looked hurriedly around for some second best position. There was none. Although it was only one o'clock and the big race was not to start for two hours yet, people were already lined up at the rail, eight or ten deep, the outermost having no more chance to see anything of the race than if they had remained on their train. The police had cleared spectators off the infield; to get back to the grand stand, dimly discerned through the haze a mile away, was now a physical impossibility without an airplane. We were done for. After all our years of anticipation we were not going to see the Grand National; after the long journey, the sacrifice of precious days of hunting, we were simply going to stand in a crowd and suffer.

In a daze of defeat, I bought entrance tickets for a few shillings at the little office at the end of the stand, the official handing me a sardonic smile along with the change. We again cast a hopeless glance or two over the packed seats and turned away, abjectly out of luck.

As we aimlessly strolled away, I thought I heard my name called.

We had noticed that a very small space at one end of the stand was railed off and guarded by a special gatekeeper and an aggressive sign reading "Steeplechase Association Badges Only," or words to that effect. This little compartment had only a few gentlemen in it and there were seats for more; it was evidently reserved for officials.

Here, over the railing, leaned a man calling out my name. We hurried back, talking up to him as well as his greater altitude would permit. He gave his name which I did not recognize any more than I recognized his face, said that he was in a party with a gentleman from America and two English officers; that they had often seen B and her little sister ride in jumping contests; that recognizing B, they hated to have her disappointed and had sent him with two of their badges to see if he could smuggle them to us and thus get us into the official stand.

I was so dazed by rapid alternations of hope and despair that I made a mess of securing the badges he held down from the rail—B said it was on my part the clumsiest piece of attempted sharp practise ever seen since some caveman

first tried the cheating game; at any rate, when I reached the guardian of the gate he had his eyes fixed on the close-gripped badges, and before I said a word or offered to go into the stand, asked what I had in "that hand." My nerves gave way; the game was up after all; I could only seize the opportunity to explain to him that it was none of his qualified business what I had in my hand or my pocket or anywhere else about my person and that he was not to address me on any subject until I offered to go into the official stand. With the poor consolation of this display of bad manners we turned away again to disappear in the throng, but out of the tail of my eye I could see two gentlemen come down from the top of the stand to engage in earnest conversation with my adversary at the gate. Presently one of them covertly beckoned to me; again we presented ourselves at the entrance and, with a little peace offering slipped into the gateman's hand as we hurried through, B and I breathlessly marched up to the seats we would have chosen out of all to be had at the Aintree race course.

B was seated directly by the rail at the end of the stand. A few yards from this end was an isolated little structure looking like a very

small judges' stand, with room for about half a dozen people in its second story.

The craning of necks toward this insignificant affair as the center of interest led us to find that it had been erected for King George. Directly behind it and us was the canal; a sketchy barge, secured by ropes to each bank of the canal, showed the manner of the coming royal progress. The King, with his small party, was motored along the canal to a point opposite our stand, to be embarked on this barge and then pulled, by means of the ropes, across the water to the race course at the foot of the small but royal box. When, a few minutes before three o'clock, this manœuvre was completed (after frequent rehearsals, during the previous hour, of the act of pulling the ferry to and fro) a band nearby struck up "For He's a Jolly Good Fellow," and the King, mounted to his modest gallery, raised his black derby hat in acknowledgment of the cheering, arranged his field glasses and lit a capable looking cigar in preparation for the climax of the day. The Prince of Wales missed the race this year because of the most recent of his series of tumbles, this one involving a kick in the face after his horse had gone down while schooling for a steeplechase.

All this time races of sorts were being run somewhere on the course, the regular fixtures of the Aintree meet, which covers three days. But we saw nothing of them, nor did the scores of thousands near us seem to be aware of anything except that the Grand National Steeplechase was about to be run.

It was a few minutes after three when people around us with good eyes and glasses announced that the thirty-four horses were parading to the track. Guided by the dark, indistinct bulk of the grandstand, which loomed up a mile away through the murky haze, we could by straining our eyes catch faint glimpses of the jockeys' colors as they manœuvred for the start. After a number of false alarms, through which the vast crowd was strangely subdued, as if there was something oppressive in the imminence of the tremendous event, the tension was broken by a running fire of shouts: "They're off!"

The horses were coming toward us; Becher's Brook was the first jump we could see in perfect detail, somewhat to our left. Next they met a plain gorse fence, still closer to us but more to the left. Immediately on jumping it they must make the left turn, at a right angle, seemingly impossible to do at racing speed and

pass directly in front of our small stand and within a few yards of where we were sitting, to be confronted by Valentine's Brook, the last furnishing a spectacular "close-up" for us.

Fairly well together, they rushed to the fearful test at Becher's Brook. Two horses, at least, we could mark collapsing there and already there were other riderless animals racing along with the field.

Over the fence at the turn and then some truly marvellous riding to get around the right angle. It was done with a smoothness and apparent ease that were amazing. As the field passed close to us we marked gallant old "Sargeant Murphy," going strong, and that the favorite, "Conjuror II," was already among the absent. He had fallen early in the race, through interference, his jockey said, from a riderless horse, though the movies, afterward, did not show this.

For Valentine's Brook we had an absolutely perfect view, at right angles to the progress of the horses; we were far enough to see the whole thing and close enough to note the expressions of the riders' faces. Nothing we had heard of the Grand National had prepared us for the sensation of that jump. That such a villainous obstacle should be taken in the horses' strides,

at full racing speed, in a grind of four and a half miles, in the breakneck fashion of hurdle racers galloping over three foot six, sketchy wattles—fairly took the breath away from anyone familiar with the limitations of horseflesh and the inevitable vicissitudes of thirty horses crowding to their jumps.

It was a different order of effort from other racing. In a flash one understood what had always been a mystery, the "swing" back of the jockey at the jump until he lay on his back behind the saddle. The rhythm here was different, the extension, the momentum and shock of landing. Nevertheless I was sure my eye caught two or three of the riders using the "forward" seat and the "slow" movies subsequently confirmed this impression.

We were scarcely breathing normally again before the horses were sighted in the distance on the second and last round. Only sixteen or eighteen were left in the running, exclusive of three or four without riders mechanically plugging around the course with the blind emulation of their kind.

As they came nearer it was plain that one horse was demonstrating his clear superiority. Twenty odd lengths in front of the ruck ran "Winnall," running strongly, with an ease that

suggested joints moving in oil. A grand, confident leap over the horror at Becher's Brook added a further bit to the leader's advantage and as he swept down to the fence at the turn it was obvious to the most untutored that barring accidents he would win the race.

But just here the evil genius of the Grand National took a hand. A misguided policeman on the infield, confronted by a wildly galloping riderless horse escaped from the track and his jockey, shooed the animal back on the course. It raced along a few lengths ahead of "Winnall" until it reached the fence at the Turn, where it refused, ducked and turned sidewise just in the path of the splendid leader of the race. "Winnall" put on brakes to save a smash; his rider came off and they were out of the contest.

The beaten herd behind swept on and passed us in desperate efforts to bring a new leader to the front; practically as soon as the finishing line was crossed the result came by telephone to the King's stand and was passed to ours—the winner a horse we had never heard of and had not noticed in the race, one that in former years had been tried, found wanting, changed hands for about a hundred pounds and been put to the plough.

The incident of "Winnall's" undeserved ill-fortune was only the most dramatic of many such interferences from riderless horses in this and every other running of the Grand National. It illustrates the one failure of Aintree to live up to its reputation of being the most magnificent racing event. It is no slight criticism to say, as one can say truly, that the best horse does not win the Grand National. The winner must be a good horse; no other could run four and a half miles, jump thirty-two such obstacles and finish, even finish lame, as "Master Robert" did this year. But there were better horses there, and the usual place of the better horse—out in front of the ruck—gives him more than his share of fouling from the riderless horses, which, carrying no weight but their own, are apt to be out in front also. How the matter can be remedied, by elimination races or other methods of cutting down the field to the ten or dozen best horses, is not a layman's problem; but the most famous racing event on earth should not continue to suffer from such a serious sporting reproach.

Back to London and the Berkeley we traveled; my comment on the race was that I would not have missed it for a thousand pounds and would not do it over again for a

million; B's, that she wanted to see every Grand National run during the rest of her life.

Early Saturday morning, we met Sir Henry Lunn, his son Brian and the latter's charming little Irish bride and took the train for Dover. This trip had been planned by Sir Henry to give B a taste of Belgium, of mediæval Bruges and a brief motor trip to the battlefields of Flanders. Our host had strong and constructive ideas on the subject of avoiding seasickness on the ill-famed Dover-Ostend packet; being as full of the milk of human kindness as he was energetic and forceful, he had arranged to have his little capsules distributed gratis to travelers at large by the railway gatemen and such public servants. One took a capsule a couple of hours before embarking and another when the Channel began to work its will on the swift steamer. B and I used the remedy, and got through the ordeal very creditably, considering that we faced a northeaster stiff enough to keep all the ship's company but two or three as far from the lunch saloon as they could get without swimming. The medicine is dispensed at chemist's shops under the name "Mother's ill"; its effect was to make one very drowsy and if one gracefully gives way to this relaxed condition and goes to sleep in one's

cabin there is no doubt but that the worst horrors of the Channel can be avoided.

We arrived at Bruges Saturday afternoon, putting up at the "Hotel de Flandres," an attractive hotel of modest capacity which Sir Henry had recently acquired. Our party were the only guests. The manager was a brisk and efficient young woman, Miss Haggard, a niece of Sir Rider Haggard, the novelist. She knew Bruges to its most remote, quaint corner and kindly took B and me in tow on a search for little out-of-the-way shops, unspoiled by summer tourists, where we bought lace kickshaws and fol-de-rols, the work of Belgian peasant girls, for presents to home folks. We were shown some lace articles, museum pieces, with thread so fine and fragile that the girls could only manipulate it in the damp atmosphere of their farmhouse cellars, a practise which led to much tubercular trouble among them.

Bruges retains in spots a more genuine mediæval quality than any other city I have seen. The Grande Place, with its view of the town hall, the boat trips on canals looking up to backyards and stone walls and windows that had not changed for so many hundred years, the Cathedral and the Memmling pictures gave

B an admirable introduction to the quaint and picturesque in continental sightseeing.

We motored to Ypres, Ghent, Zeebrugge, Paschendaele and along scores of miles of dunes spotted everywhere with German gun emplacements and ammunition dumps. Ypres and the surrounding battle-grounds are the most depressing places imaginable, not so much because of devastation as because of the tawdry, cheap, ugly nature of the rebuilding. It was going on fast and one might say the whole region was rehabilitated; but the result was like nothing so much as the least attractive portions of East New York, back of Long Island City. Coming as we did direct from the antique loveliness and quaintness of Bruges, we found two or three hours all we could stand of this hideous reconstruction. As to devastation proper, there was but little in evidence except the blasted and ragged ghosts of trees, torn by shells, withered by flame and poisoned by gases.

This little trip as Sir Henry's guests was a perfect thing in its way, so different from all else we had been doing, so new at every point to B, so beautifully arranged by our host, not the least valuable part of it being the opportunity it gave to know Sir Henry better, which

inevitably means to become very fond of him.

He did not wash his hands of us on our return to London, two days before we sailed for home; his thought to have us lunch with the Asquiths finally was carried into action. He was disappointed that Mrs. Asquith was on the continent at the time, as he wanted us two sporting characters to talk horses and fox-hunting with her. Her place was taken by her daughter, Lady Bonham Carter, a typical intelligent and attractive young Englishwoman, very interested in our Irish experiences and in Dorset, she being, like ourselves, a devout admirer of Hardy. Mr. Asquith came late to lunch, detained by a meeting of the Liberal leaders. With him were Sir John Simon and Augustin Birrell. Sir John, I was given to understand, had the mantle of Mr. Asquith imminent above his shoulders. He impressed one as an Admirable Crichton fairly well conscious of the rôle and getting away with it with undeniable success. Seated by him, I attempted to answer his questions concerning American politics and personalities. He and most Englishmen interested in our coming presidential contest were strong for John W. Davis and very curious as to any obstacles in the way of his nomination and election. Particularly they

were mystified by the objection that Mr. Davis was a "corporation lawyer." Sir John explained some differences between the American legal world and the English, and the distinction, in the latter, between the barrister and solicitor. He said he had been retained by a public corporation that morning, but that the fact could not affect him politically as the retaining fee was five pounds. I assured him he could earn more in America by defending oil magnates in contempt proceedings.

We bade good-bye to London and to England the next morning, boarding the *President Roosevelt* at Southampton. Off Cherbourg our ship circled around the *Aquitania,* pausing in the harbor before straightening out on her course for America and on her upper deck we recognized and "waved" to Crawford and his family.

The *Roosevelt* was favored with good weather on this trip, making the swiftest passage in her career and the best time any other United States Government liner, except the *Leviathan,* had ever made.

On board was Joseph Grew, coming home from Switzerland, to take William Phillips' place in the Department of State. Grew had known Raynal Bolling at Harvard, John

Phillips and many of our friends. We foregathered immediately and warmly, success crowning our efforts to have nothing left of a contraband nature within the twelve-mile limit.

No matter how good a vacation in distant lands one has had—and no one ever had a finer adventure than we recite in these many pages—it is still better to come home and see those expectant faces on the pier where they were so tearful three months before.